



FLOATING OBJECTS
SEEN IN FLIGHT 370
SEARCH AREA

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DEAD IN BOSTON
BUILDING FIRE

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Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Thursday, March 27, 2014



Special Relationship

U.S. President Barack Obama, second left, walks among gravestones of World War One soldiers with Belgium's King Philippe, second right, and Belgian Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo, right, at the World War One Flanders Field American Cemetery in Waregem, Belgium on Wednesday, March 26, 2014.

(AP Photo/Olivier Hoslet, Pool)

Obama Stresses US-Europe Bond in Belgium

BRUSSELS (AP) — President Barack Obama and European Union leaders presented a unified front

Wednesday against Russia's annexation of Crimea, promoting trans-Atlantic trade as an antidote to Rus-

sia's influence in the region and a way to help Europe become less dependent on Moscow for energy.

Obama said if Russian leaders thought they could drive a wedge between Europe and the United

States "they clearly miscalculated."

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Malaysia Flight 370: 122 floating objects 'most credible lead' so far

ROB GRIFFITH

TODD PITMAN

Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia

(AP) — They are the most tantalizing clues yet: 122 objects spotted by satellite, floating in the turbulent Indian Ocean where officials believe the missing Malaysian jetliner went down. But bad weather, the passage of time and the sheer remoteness of their location kept answers out of the searchers' grasp.

Nineteen days into the mystery of Flight 370, the discovery of the objects

to zero in on three objects seen by satellites in recent days. Forecasters warned that the weather was likely to deteriorate again Thursday, possibly jeopardizing the search for the Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 that vanished early March 8 en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing.

Despite those weather concerns, the search resumed at first light Thursday with 11 planes and five ships scouring a search area 2,500 kilometers (1,550 miles) southwest of the Australian west coast city of Perth.

jects. The items were spotted in roughly the same area as other objects previously seen by Australian and Chinese satellites.

Clouds obscured the latest satellite images, but dozens of objects could be seen in the gaps. At a news conference in Kuala Lumpur, Hishammuddin said some of them "appeared to be bright, possibly indicating solid materials."

Australian officials did not say whether they received the French imagery in time for search planes out at sea to look for the objects,



A Royal Australian Air Force AP-3C Orion returns to RAAF base Pearce from a search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 over the southern Indian Ocean, in Bullsbrook, Australia, Wednesday, March 26, 2014. A French satellite scanning the Indian Ocean for remnants of the missing jetliner found a possible plane debris field containing 122 objects, a top Malaysian official said Wednesday, calling it "the most credible lead that we have."

(AP Photo/Jason Reed, Pool)

that ranged in size from 3 feet to 75 feet, offered "the most credible lead that we have," a top Malaysian official said Wednesday. With clouds briefly thinning in a stretch of ocean known for dangerous weather, aircraft and ships from six countries combed the waters far southwest of the Australian coast. Crews saw only three objects, one of them blue and two others that appeared to be rope. But search planes could not relocate them or find the 122 pieces seen by a French satellite. Limited by fuel and distance, they turned back for the night. That echoed the frustration of earlier sweeps that failed

With the search in motion, Malaysian officials again sought to assuage the angry relatives of the flight's 153 Chinese passengers. But Defense Minister Hishammuddin Hussein also expressed exasperation. About two-thirds of the missing are Chinese, but Hishammuddin pointedly said Chinese families "must also understand that we in Malaysia also lost our loved ones," as did "so many other nations."

The latest satellite images, captured Sunday and relayed by French-based Airbus Defense and Space, are the first to suggest a debris field from the plane, rather than just isolated ob-

jects and did not return repeated phone messages seeking further comment. None of the three objects spotted by searchers Wednesday "were considered to be distinctive to MH370 or relevant to the satellite imagery," Australian Maritime Safety Authority officials said. If the objects are confirmed to be from the flight, "then we can move on to deep sea surveillance search and rescue, hopefully, hoping against hope," Hishammuddin said.

But experts cautioned that the area's frequent high seas and bad weather and its distance from land complicated an already-trying search. □

AROUND THE CARIBBEAN

Pit bulls kill Trinidad woman at home

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad (AP) — Officials say an 84-year-old woman has been killed by three pit bulls in the yard of her Trinidad home. Police say Sylvia Roberts was savaged by pit bulls owned by her son in Tunapuna, a town outside the capital of Port-of-Spain. She was chatting with a postman Tuesday when the dogs attacked. She was pronounced dead at the scene. Officers shot and killed the animals. Roberts is one of at least seven people killed by pit bulls in Trinidad since 1998. Attorney General Anand Ramlogan says pit bulls have a "propensity for violent attacks."

Man accused of impregnating a child

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — U.S. federal authorities have arrested a 64-year-old man in Puerto Rico on accusations he twice impregnated his young granddaughter. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said Wednesday that Manuel Natal is accused of paying the 12-year-old girl between \$20 and \$80 to have sex with him on several occasions. Authorities say the girl became pregnant at age 12 and again at age 13. Authorities also accuse Natal of encouraging the girl to drink certain beverages to induce a miscarriage. □

Pennsylvania man drowns in Jamaica

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — Police in Jamaica say an American vacationer has drowned while swimming off a popular resort town on the western side of the Caribbean island. The Jamaica Constabulary Force identifies the dead man as 43-year-old David McCormick of the U.S. state of Pennsylvania. It has not released the man's hometown. A police statement says McCormick was swimming off the beach town of Negril when he got into difficulties and "drowned before help could reach him."

He had been staying at a resort perched on Negril's seaside cliffs. □

Puerto Rico planning \$350M project

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Puerto Rico's governor says private investors will help build a \$350 million housing and commercial complex near the capital of San Juan. Alejandro Garcia Padilla said Wednesday that more than 180 homes will be built in the north municipality of Guaynabo along with a 350-hotel room and a convention center, among other things. He says the project will take up to 10 years to complete and will create more than 5,800 jobs. The announcement comes as Garcia seeks to boost the island's economy. □

Trinidad official fired for misbehavior

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad (AP) — Trinidad & Tobago's leader has fired a government minister for harassing a flight attendant on the national airline. Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar said this week that Glen Ramdharsingh lost his appointment as minister of people and social development. After a Friday flight to Port-of-Spain, Caribbean Airlines attendant Ronelle Laidlow filed a complaint against the official. She quoted him as saying that her "days are numbered." Persad-Bissessar says her administration will make "no allowance for arrogance." □

California state senator accused of gun charges

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A California state senator who advocated gun control legislation asked for campaign donations in exchange for introducing an undercover FBI agent to an arms trafficker and told him how to get shoulder-fired automatic weapons and missiles from a Muslim separatist group in the Philippines, according to court documents unsealed Wednesday. The allegations against State Sen. Leland Yee were outlined in an FBI affidavit in support of a criminal complaint. The affidavit accuses Yee of conspiracy to deal firearms without a license and to illegally import firearms. He was arrested Wednesday.

Yee's arrest came as a shock to Chinese-Americans who see the senator as a pioneering leader in the community and a mainstay of San Francisco politics, said David Lee, director of the Chinese American Voters Education Committee.

Yee is also accused of accepting tens of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions and cash payments to provide introductions, help a client get a contract and influence legislation. He or members of his campaign staff accepted at least \$42,800 in cash or campaign contributions from undercover FBI agents in exchange for carrying out the agents' specific requests, the court documents allege.

Yee discussed helping the agent get weapons worth \$500,000 to \$2.5 million, including shoulder fired automatic weapons and missiles, and took him through the entire process of acquiring them from a Muslim separatist group in the Philippines to bringing them to the United States, according to the affidavit by FBI Special Agent Emmanuel V. Pascua.

He was unhappy with his life and told the agent he wanted to hide out in the Philippines, according to the affidavit. □

Obama stresses US-Europe bond in Belgium

Continued from front

Obama spoke during a news conference at the Council of the European Union, after a working lunch with European

and Europe on economic sanctions against Russia has been excellent and warned that if Russia continues on its current course, "the isolation will deepen." The leaders also expressed confidence they would

tions about whether free trade deals will benefit them in the long-term. But he cautioned skeptics to wait to see what's negotiated before reaching conclusions. The president said some

and climate issues, he said. Obama's own relations with Europe have been hurt by revelations of communications prying by the U.S. National Security Agency. Van Rompuy said E.U. leaders conveyed their concerns directly to Obama in their meeting, and the president agreed to take aggressive steps to address the issue. Van Rompuy called for "equal treatment of E.U. and U.S. citizens."

Obama came to Brussels to shore up commitments he received from allies in The Hague, Netherlands, to reassure Eastern European members of NATO that the alliance will stand by them and to make a larger point about European security a quarter-century after the fall of the Iron Curtain. He met later with NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, head of the alliance born as a bulwark against the Soviet Union.

Obama said he wants to see every NATO partner "chip in" for mutual defense and that members should examine their defense plans to make sure they reflect current threats. "I have had some concerns about a diminished level of defense spending by some of our partners in NATO," Obama said. "The situation in Ukraine reminds us that our freedom isn't free." □



U.S. President Barack Obama, center, shakes hands with EU Council President Herman Van Rompuy, right, and EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, left, prior to an EU-US summit meeting at the EU Council building in Brussels on Wednesday, March 26, 2014.

(AP Photo/Virginia Mayo)

Council President Herman Van Rompuy and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso that participants said was dominated by discussion of Ukraine. Van Rompuy called Russia's action in Crimea "a disgrace in the 21st century, and we will not recognize it."

Obama said coordination between the U.S.

complete a Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership that seeks to remove trade barriers between the 28-nation bloc and the U.S. Obama noted the arrangement would have a Ukraine connection because it could provide a counterweight to Russian energy leverage in Europe. Obama said some countries have legitimate ques-

suspitions about the so-called TTIP have been unjustified. He declared that he has fought for consumer and environmental protections during his political career and will not sign legislation that would weaken those protections. "I'm confident we can actually shape a trade deal" that is acceptable to critics on consumer protections

Senators concerned by Secret Service allegations

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Democratic chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee and a senior Republican senator expressed concern Wednesday over an alleged incident involving a drunken Secret Service agent in connection with President Barack Obama's overseas trip to the Netherlands. On Sunday, the agency called three agents home from the Netherlands just before Obama's arrival for talks with foreign leaders in The Hague. One agent had been found inebriated inside a hotel, according to reports.

Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del.,



The U.S. flag flies outside Hotel Huis ter Duin, the hotel where President Barack Obama stayed Monday night, in Noordwijk, western Netherlands, Wednesday, March 26, 2014. A Secret Service agent found drunk by staff at an undisclosed Dutch hotel was recalled to the U.S. along with two of his colleagues, the day before President Barack Obama was set to arrive in the Netherlands.

(AP Photo/Peter Dejong)

the Homeland Security Committee chairman, said Wednesday he is "troubled by the reports regarding the behavior of a few Secret Service agents serving on the president's detail in the Netherlands," according to a statement. His office said he's asked the Secret Service for more information about the episode. Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said in a statement that the incident "shows that the agency has to deal with some in its ranks who fail to respect the important job the agency is tasked with." □

2 firefighters dead in Boston building fire

PAIGE SUTHERLAND

Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — A fast-moving fire that sent smoke and flames pouring from the roof and windows of a Boston residential building killed two firefighters on Wednesday and injured at least five others.

The deadly fire snarled traffic in Boston's densely populated Back Bay neighborhood. Boston EMS spokesman Nick Martin said 18 people, all police officers or firefighters, were taken to hospitals.

Fire department spokesman Steve MacDonald said there were no reports of residents missing and it appeared everyone who was inside at the time had escaped.

City Councilor Josh Zakim, who represents the area, confirmed the two firefighters' deaths. He said nine units in the four-story building were affected.

"On this tragic day, our thoughts and prayers are with the brave men and women who fought this fire," Zakim said.

Major thoroughfare Storrow Drive was shut down for a time, and people were being asked to stay out of the area. The mayor's of-

fice designated the nearby Boston Public Library as a center for people displaced or otherwise affected by the fire to get help.

An assistant district attorney was sent to the scene, standard procedure in cases in which there are serious or potentially life-threatening injuries or deaths, said Jake Wark, a spokesman for Suffolk District Attorney Dan Conley. There was no immediate word on the cause of the fire, which was still burning several hours later.

Despite strong winds and cold temperatures, people gathered to watch firefighters work from outside the building. "The smoke was unbelievable," said Kayla Dasilva, who lives a few blocks away and went with her roommate to see what was happening.

Anna Kosmidou, who lives in the apartment building next to the one that caught fire, said she and other residents were told they could not stay there Wednesday night.

"I'm very, very afraid. I'm still in shock," she said. "They called me at work, and then I ran over here." □



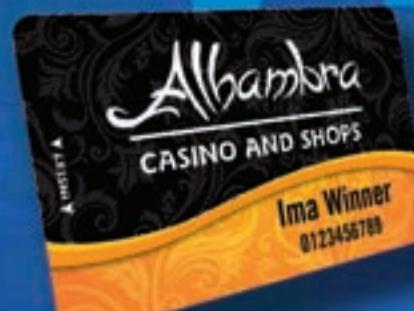
Boston firefighters work a multi-alarm brownstone fire, Wednesday, March 26, 2014, in Boston. A Boston city councilor said two firefighters have died in a fire that ripped through a brownstone.

(AP Photo/The Boston Herald, Christopher Evans)



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CASINO AND SHOPS

Man executed for raping, killing teen in 1989

JIM SALTER
Associated Press

BONNE TERRE, Missouri

(AP) — A death-row inmate convicted of kidnapping, raping and killing a 17-year-old girl in suburban St. Louis was executed early Wednesday in Missouri, marking the state's fifth execution in as many months. Jeffrey Ferguson abducted Kelli Hall as she finished her shift at a Mobil gas station in St. Charles on Feb. 9, 1989. Hall's naked, frozen body was found 13 days later on a St. Louis County farm, and investigators determined she had been raped and strangled.

Strapped to a hospital gurney, Ferguson was animated in the moments before his midnight execution at the state prison in Bonne Terre. To ease the tension, he made funny faces and mouthed words to relatives, who included his two daughters, sitting in the observation room. As the lethal drug was administered, he took a few deep breaths before becoming still, and his daughters cried as he closed his eyes. The 59-year-old was pronounced dead at 12:11 a.m. "I'm sorry to have to be the cause that brings you all into this dark business of execution," Ferguson said in his final statement. □

Officials: Some mudslide victims may not be found

BRIAN SKOLOFF

LISA BAUMANN

Associated Press

DARRINGTON, Washington

(AP) — Authorities in Washington state said Tuesday they have found additional remains at the site of a massive, deadly landslide. Washington State Patrol spokesman Bob Calkins said authorities will release more specific informa-

hands kept slogging through the mess of broken wood and mud again Wednesday, looking for more bodies or anyone who might still be alive nearly five days after a wall of fast-moving earth destroyed a small rural community. But authorities have acknowledged they might have to leave some victims buried.

kilometers) and 30 to 40 feet (9 to 12 meters) deep in places, with a moon-like surface that includes quicksand-like muck, rain-slickened mud and ice. The terrain is difficult to navigate on foot and makes it treacherous or impossible to bring in heavy equipment.

To make matters worse, the pile is laced with other



Emergency vehicles fill Highway 530 leading to the scene of a deadly mudslide that covers the road, Wednesday, March 26, 2014, in Oso, Wash. Sixteen bodies have been recovered, but authorities believe at least 24 people were killed. And scores of others are still unaccounted for, although many of those names were believed to be duplicates or people who escaped safely.

(AP Photo/Rick Wilking, Pool)

tion Wednesday evening. Previously, authorities said they believed they had found 24 bodies from the slide that swept through a rural area north of Seattle on Saturday.

Search crews using dogs, bulldozers and their bare

Dozens of people remain unaccounted for, although that number is expected to go down.

Trying to recover every corpse would be impractical and dangerous.

The debris field is about a square mile (2.6 square

hazards that include fallen trees, propane and septic tanks, twisted vehicles and countless shards of shattered homes.

In previous mudslides, many victims were left where they perished. Mudslides killed thousands in

Venezuela in 1999, and about 1,500 bodies were found. But the death toll was estimated at 5,000 to 30,000, so the government declared entire neighborhoods "memorial grounds." Two Washington National Guard Blackhawk helicopters arrived at the site Wednesday to relieve sheriff's helicopter crews that had been working since Saturday.

The Blackhawks' sole mission is body removal, said Bill Quistorf, chief pilot for the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office.

As families grieved, officials were pressed again Wednesday about warnings from years ago that showed the potential for catastrophic landslides in the area. In 1999, a draft report by geomorphologist Daniel Miller conducted as part of an ecosystem restoration study highlighted the potential risk of a landslide. That has raised questions about why residents were allowed to build homes in the area and whether the county had taken proper precautions.

Snohomish County Emergency Management Director John Pennington said authorities took steps to mitigate risks and warn people of potential dangers, especially after a 2006 landslide in the area. □



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Social painting grows popular at bars, art studios

KATHY MATHESON
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The Fox and Hound pub in downtown Philadelphia boasts all the fixings of a standard sports bar: huge TVs, numerous beers on draft and a menu filled with

spot ahead of time. The two-hour event, like more than a dozen others held weekly in Philadelphia, often sells out. The experience known as social painting is seeing explosive growth in cities across the country as peo-

outings, bachelorette parties and the simply curious. Many can't remember their last encounter with a palette.

Yet something clearly resonates. Painting with a Twist opened its BYOB studio in Philadelphia's funky South

Boston bar in March 2012, has grown in two years to 55,000 people attending 1,100 events per month in the U.S. and Canada, co-founder Sean McGrail said. The company has been adding 10 cities a month and just started its first over-

patrons out of the deal. Vann, who served drinks in bars for years, now teaches her craft there and creates new artwork on the side. As one of two Philadelphia licensees, she also runs the financial end of her operation, which has included hiring help to keep up with demand. "When I saw this job, I couldn't believe it because it seemed way too good to be true," Vann said. On one recent night at Fox and Hound, Vann humorously walked a group of 40 through the creation of "Heavenly Stream," an ethereal depiction of a forest in autumn.

First, she made the budding Renoirs pledge not to whine about how badly they paint or how they screwed up the size of the tree trunk. And, she warned, don't even think about asking her to fix a "mistake."

There are no mistakes at Paint Nite. Well, except for the occasional brush in a beer glass, which often sits next to the plastic water cup used to rinse bristles.

Allyson Meng, who works in customer service for a transportation company, said she took the art excursion because she wanted to "step outside my boundaries."

"It was a challenge for me, but I really did enjoy it," Meng said. "I don't have an artistic bone in my body."

Some said they came to shake up their night life — to "drink creatively," as the Paint Nite motto says.

Yet Romaine suggested that perhaps participants are attracted to the idea of doing something tactile, making an object they can touch and take home.

"People don't do a lot of things with their hands anymore," she said. "We're all on screens all day." □



In this March, 2014 photo, participants paint a sunset during a Paint Nite event at the Field House sports bar in Philadelphia. Cities like Philadelphia, Boston and New York are offering a creative way to socialize and bring out your inner artist: Paint Nite. A ticket buys you a small canvas, brushes, paints and an easy two-hour lesson at a neighborhood bar.

(AP Photo/Matt Slocum)

burgers, wings and nachos. So what are all the easels and canvases for?

Welcome to Paint Nite, an opportunity to tap your inner van Gogh. Just order a drink, put on a smock and lighten up a bit as a friendly instructor takes you step-by-step through the brush strokes of a landscape, still life or skyline.

But be sure to reserve your

people seek to imbibe and relax while rediscovering their creative side.

"It's been crazy," said Laura Romaine, assistant manager of Painting with a Twist, another paint-and-sip business in the city. "They're like banging down the door to come in here and paint."

Not an artist? Join the club. The crowds include couples on dates, co-ed group

Street area in October and already is looking for a second location downtown, Romaine said.

The Louisiana-based firm, which offers lessons as well as private painting parties, had 126 franchises nationwide as of last year — more than double its total in 2011, officials said.

And Paint Nite, which started with one event at a

seas operation in Sydney, Australia, he said. Next up: Johannesburg and Buenos Aires.

Paint Nite has also allowed artists like Andrea Vann, 26, to quit unrewarding day jobs and focus full time on their passion. The business operates on a revenue-share model with its licensees, and the hosting pubs and restaurants get extra

Using video, GM CEO Barra reaching out to customers

DEE-ANN DURBIN

TOM KRISHER

AP Auto Writers

DETROIT (AP) — General Motors CEO Mary Barra is reaching out directly to customers, as GM tries to counter bad publicity from a recall of cars with a potentially deadly ignition switch defect.

GM posted five videos of Barra on its website Wednesday answering questions about the recall of 1.6 million compact cars to fix the ignition switches. The company also said Barra listened in on customer calls for about a half hour last Thursday at the automaker's suburban Detroit call center, although none of the callers spoke about the recall.

GM has acknowledged it knew about the problem for at least a decade but did not recall the cars until last month. The problem is linked to at least 12 deaths. In the short videos, Barra assures viewers that the compact cars are safe, as long as they remove everything from their key rings. GM has said that weight dangling from the rings can cause the ignition to slide out of the run position into accessory or off. That shuts down the engine and disables power-assisted steering, power brakes and air bags. As a result, a driver can lose

control of their car.

Barra, who became CEO Jan. 15, also tells people that replacement ignition switches will be available starting April 7, so GM can start fixing the cars. She says there will be enough parts available to fix all the cars by October, she said. On Feb. 13, GM announced the recall of more than 780,000 Chevrolet Cobalts and Pontiac G5s (model years 2005-2007). Two weeks later it added 842,000 Ion compacts (2003-2007), and Chevrolet HHR SUVs and Pontiac Solstice and Saturn Sky sports cars (2006-2007). The recalled cars have the same ignition switches.

The company has told dealers to offer loaner cars to drivers until the repairs can be made. It has received 9,000 requests for cars and has granted several thousand, spokesman Klaus-Peter Martin said. He did not know an exact number.

But GM didn't tell owners about the rental car offer in its recall letters.

A Texas law firm is disputing Barra's contention that the cars are safe to drive if weight is removed from the key rings. The firm filed a federal court lawsuit asking a judge to order GM to tell customers to park the cars until they are repaired. □

US Financial Front: America's durable goods orders rise

MARTIN CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Orders to U.S. factories for long-lasting manufactured goods rose in February by the most in three months, but a key category that reflects business investment fell sharply. This category fell 1.3 percent, the second setback in three months. Economists said the weakness in business investment might reflect the severe winter, which led some industries to put modernization and expansion plans on hold.

Overall orders for durable goods rose 2.2 percent after a 1.3 percent drop in January,

the Commerce Department said Wednesday. The February increase was driven by a surge in orders for commercial aircraft, a category that tends to fluctuate sharply from month to month.

Joel Naroff, chief economists at Naroff Economic Advisors, said he expected economic growth to slow sharply in the January-March quarter, reflecting the disruptions caused by the harsh weather, before recovering in coming months.

"The rebound could be huge once spring actually appears," Naroff said.

A 13.6 percent jump in demand for commercial aircraft followed a 22.1 per-



A woman walks through a display of refrigerators at a Lowe's store in Cranberry Township, Pa. The Commerce Department released durable goods for February on Wednesday, March 26, 2014.

(AP Photo/Gene J. Puskar)

cent plunge in the previous month. Orders for motor vehicles and parts showed a solid gain of 3.6 percent in February after a 1.9 percent fall in January.

Demand also rose for primary metals such as steel. Orders for machinery fell 1.5 percent. Demand for computers fell 0.5 percent and for communications equipment 2.7 percent.

Many economists think manufacturing output will strengthen in spring, reflecting better weather af-

ter winter storms disrupted production at some factories.

The Institute for Supply Management's gauge of manufacturing activity expanded faster in February as companies received more orders and boosted their stockpiles. Its manufacturing index rose to 53.2 in February from 51.3 in January. That only partially reversed a 5-point drop in January. Any reading above 50 indicates that manufacturing is expanding. □



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Thrill ride 'Falcon's Fury' to debut at Busch Gardens

TAMARA LUSH

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — Thrill ride developers at Busch Gardens acknowledge that the park's newest attraction might not be everyone's idea of a good time.

Falcon's Fury opens on May 1. Riders will be seated upright and whisked to the top of a 335-foot (102-meter) tower, then the seat will pivot 90 degrees so the guest is looking straight down.

That's when the ride plunges in a six-second free fall. Jeff Hornick, director of design and engineering at Busch Gardens, said riders will reach speeds of up to 60 miles (97 kilometers) per hour on the plunge.

"It's a different kind of thrill ride than a roller coaster," said Hornick. "It's really polarizing. You're either really going to want to ride it or not want to ride it at all."

Park officials say it's the tallest, free-standing drop tower in North America and the only one in the world to feature forward tilting seats.

"Drop towers have been popular at theme parks for many years, but what you see with Falcon's Fury is the industry's relentless drive for innovation," said Jeremy Schoolfield, editor-in-chief of Funworld Magazine. "Ride designers are always looking for new twists on classic attractions, and Fury's pivoting seats certainly fit that bill. Putting riders in a facedown position as they drop toward the ground is definitely a new take on this type of ride." There are taller drop towers in the U.S., but they are integrated with other rides or buildings.

Lex Luthor: Drop of Doom at Six Flags Magic Mountain in California has a 400-foot (122-meter) drop and the Zumanjaro: Drop of Doom at Six Flags Great Adventure in New Jersey will have a 415-foot (127-meter) drop when it's constructed later this year. Both of those are attached to other rides. A famous drop tower is the Big Shot, the ride atop the Stratosphere hotel and casino in Las Vegas that catapults



This artist's rendering supplied by Busch Gardens shows Falcon's Fury, a new thrill ride opening May 1 at the theme park in Tampa, Fla.

(AP Photo/Busch Gardens Tampa)

riders 160 feet (49 meters) in the air.

Falcon's Fury stands alone, and Hornick says guests can see downtown Tampa and even St. Petersburg some 30 miles (48 kilometers) away once at the top. Guests must be 54 inches (1.3 meters) tall to ride. A circular gondola of 32 seats takes the riders to the top of the tower — once there, a computer program determines how long the riders will stay at the peak before the gut-wrenching plunge.

Hornick said the wait time at the top will be randomized, anywhere from one to five seconds.

"The only thing you're going to hear is your heart beat," he joked.

On the 60-mile (97-kilometer) per-hour drop, the seats will be pulled back, to give riders a feeling of "ripping" a parachute cord, said Hornick.

The park wanted more of a scary, thrill ride to debut this year, he said, following a few years of new family friendly rides and stage shows. □

Captain: Cruise ships may over-rely on electronics



A Navy Seahawk helicopter prepares to drop supplies onto the Carnival Splendor cruise ship during relief efforts in waters off Mexico's Baja Peninsula, seen from the USS Ronald Reagan aircraft carrier. Cruise operators, like airline pilots, may be relying too heavily on electronics to navigate massive ships, losing the knowledge and ability needed to operate a vessel in the case of a power failure, an expert sea pilot told a federal agency on Wednesday.

RAMIT MASTI

Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Cruise operators, like airline pilots, may be relying too heavily on electronics to navigate massive ships, losing the knowledge and ability needed to operate a ves-

sel in the case of a power failure, an expert sea pilot told a federal agency on Wednesday.

Capt. Jorge Viso with the Tampa Bay Pilots testified before the National Transportation Safety Board on the second day of a two-

day hearing the agency is holding after several high-profile cruise mishaps, including last year's fire aboard the Carnival Triumph that left thousands of passengers stranded for days in squalid conditions aboard a powerless ship

adrift in the Gulf of Mexico. In 2010, a fire also knocked out power to the Carnival Splendor in the Pacific Ocean, also stranding passengers at sea until the vessel could be towed to port. In 2012, the Costa Concordia ship capsized off Italy,

killing 32 people.

Cruise ship captains are handling high-tech vessels with state-of-the-art navigation systems, Viso said, but added that he fears they are not as adept at manually handling the massive ships as they become over-dependent on fancy electronics.

"We have noticed a trend for too much reliance on electronic navigation," said Viso, who as a pilot assists large cruise ships get to port in Florida.

"If there is an instrument failure, a control failure or presentation failure there are distinct disadvantages to those not familiar with the handling of a vessel," Viso added, comparing it to a similar phenomenon gaining attention in the airline industry. "There is a definite trend toward driving the ship electronically, and while some may argue that this is the future, we are not there today." □



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Turkish courts overturn PM's ban on Twitter

SEBNEM ARSU

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ISTANBUL - A court in Turkey ruled on Wednesday that the government could not ban Twitter as it sought to do five days ago, and ordered the country's telecommunications authority to restore access to the service.

The action by the government had been met with an uproar inside and outside the country about respect for freedom of expression.

It was not immediately clear whether the ruling would be appealed or overtaken by a new court order.

The court in Ankara, the capital, ruled in response to complaints by Turkey's bar association and its journalists' union, arguing that the attempt to block Twitter contravened the freedom of information and communication.

The telecommunications authority imposed the ban on the ground that Twitter has refused to remove content that violated personal privacy. But government critics had used Twitter to publicize leaked recordings of telephone conversations that were said to show widespread corruption among government officials and people close to Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, including his son. Erdogan said his adversaries fabricated the recordings.

Twitter welcomed the ruling, saying that the government ban had been disproportionate and illegal and that the complaints the government had about content had already been addressed. □

Egypt:

Army chief says he will run for president

SARAH EL DEEB

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, the Egyptian military chief who last summer removed the elected Islamist president, announced Wednesday that he will run for president in elections expected next month, putting him on an apparent track to lead a nation beleaguered by ongoing turmoil and violence, a broken political order, a dilapidated economy and concerns over the chances for building a democracy. Wearing his military fatigues in a nationally televised speech, el-Sissi announced he was resigning from the armed forces — a required step since only civilians can run for president. He declared that it was the last time he would wear his uniform because he was stepping down to run president and continue to defend the country. He said he was "answering the demand of a wide range of Egyptians." The 59-year-old el-Sissi is widely expected to win the vote, and restore a tradition of presidents from military background that Egypt had for all but one year since 1952. He has been the country's most powerful figure since removing President Mohammed Morsi, and Morsi's once politically dominant Muslim Brotherhood has since been declared a terrorist group.

A nationalist fervor has gripped the country since the removal of Morsi, who in 2012 became Egypt's first freely elected and civilian president. The ouster in July came after massive protests by millions against Morsi and the Islamists. Since then, the military

backed interim government has waged a fierce crackdown on the Brotherhood, arresting thousands of members and killing hundreds of protesters in clashes. At the same time, militants have waged a campaign of attacks on

love him or even worship him. But on the other hand, there are those who hate Gen. el-Sissi and hold him responsible for the blood that has been shed," Karkar told The Associated Press. For months, Egyptian media have been depicting

needs.

"He is a political man, a military man, and an economics man. He understands in everything regarding the state," he said. "We can't compare him to anyone else. The country needs a strong man of his size."



In this image made from video broadcast on Egypt's State Television, Egypt's military chief Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi speaks in a nationally televised speech, announcing that he will run for president, in Cairo, Egypt, Wednesday, March 26, 2014. In a nationally televised speech, el-Sissi said he has resigned from the military. Wearing military fatigues, he said it was the last time he would wear it and that "I give up the uniform to defend the nation" and run in elections expected next month. (AP Photo/Egyptian State Television)

police and the military, and authorities have accused the Brotherhood of orchestrating terrorism, a claim the group denies.

Magdy Karkar, a senior member of a Brotherhood-led coalition organizing anti-government protests, said el-Sissi's candidacy confirms that Morsi's removal was a coup aimed at wrecking democracy, as Islamists have contended. "His running will not achieve stability in Egypt. It's true he has many supporters who

el-Sissi, who was promoted to the rank of field marshal in January, as "the savior of the nation" for removing Morsi — and touting him as the only figure capable of running the country. Although there are no credible nationwide polls — in a country with widespread illiteracy — there is a strong sense that el-Sissi will easily win, with little competition. Watching his speech in a coffee shop in Cairo, Sabry Ahmed, in his late 50s, said el-Sissi has what Egypt

in the neighborhood where el-Sissi was born in old Cairo, celebrations broke out as soon as he finished his speech. A distant relative, Mohammed Haroun, cheered: "This is the best decision he took in his life." His candidacy — and presidency, if he wins — is another dramatic turn in Egypt's trajectory that began with the 2011 ouster of autocrat Hosni Mubarak in a popular uprising demanding democracy after a 29-year rule. □

Pope accepts resignation of high-spending German bishop

MELISSA EDDY

© 2014 New York Times

BERLIN — Pope Francis on Wednesday accepted the resignation of Franz-Peter Tebartz-van Elst, the bishop of Limburg, whose extravagant spending on renovations for his personal residence angered his congregation and ran afoul of the pontiff's mes-

sage of humility and modesty for the Roman Catholic Church.

The Holy See accepted the German bishop's offer to resign, "given that it has come to a situation in the Limburg diocese that prevents Franz-Peter Tebartz-van Elst from fruitfully carrying out his duties," the Vatican said in a statement

Wednesday. After mounting criticism over spiraling costs, the Limburg diocese confirmed in October that Tebartz-van Elst, 54, had poured at least 31 million euros (about \$43 million) into the renovation of his residence and church buildings. The costs had originally been estimated at 5.5 million euros.

Last fall, the German news media carried reports of exorbitant indulgences by the bishop, including 15,000 euros on a bathtub and the costly reopening of the roof of his personal chapel to allow for the suspension of an enormous cross. As discontent over the allegations mounted, the bishop traveled to the

Vatican in October and offered his resignation to the pope. Francis suspended him at the time, pending the outcome of an investigation by Germany's conference of bishops. The Vatican said Wednesday that the bishop would be assigned another position in the church, but declined to give further details. □

Venezuelan institutions unite against opposition

HANNAH DREIER

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Venezuela's military, congress and Supreme Court are joining in an increasingly blunt response to the country's opposition as protests continue.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday sentenced the opposition mayor of a restive border city to a year in jail for failing to remove road barricades put up by anti-government activists. It sent another mayor to jail last week for the same reason.

President Nicolas Maduro has repeatedly accused the protesters of trying to stage a coup against his socialist government and drive him from power before his term ends in 2019. He also accuses the opposition of ignoring his mandate after pro-government candidates prevailed in mayoral elections in December.

On Tuesday, Maduro dramatized the allegation of anti-government plotting by announcing that three air force generals had

been arrested for planning a coup, allegedly after meeting with members of the opposition. He later promised to seek the

research firm IHS, said the arrests were likely intended as a message to the troops about the power the administration has over mili-

the kind of dialogue you open, because you could risk losing your career," Moya-Ocampos said from London. Details about the



Leading opposition politician Maria Corina Machado, center, greets supporters upon her arrival for a rally in Caracas, Venezuela, Wednesday, March 26, 2014. The head of Venezuela's congress, Diosdado Cabello, said Monday that Machado, who was stripped of her parliament seat, violated the constitution by addressing the Organization of American States last week at the invitation of Panama, which ceded its seat at the Washington-based group so she could provide regional diplomats with a firsthand account of the unrest.

(AP Photo/Fernando Llano)

harshest penalty possible. Diego Moya-Ocampos, a Latin American analyst at

tary tribunals. "I think the sign he wants to send is, 'Be careful with

arrests remained scarce Wednesday, though Maduro singled out a prominent

government critic who allegedly tried to meet the three: Rocio San Miguel, director of a group that monitors Venezuela's military.

San Miguel told The Associated Press she knew nothing about the allegations. She added that no coup against Maduro was remotely possible, given the president's dramatic expansion of the military's role running of the government.

Hours after Maduro spoke, the military issued an impassioned vow of loyalty to the president, insisting there were no cracks in its "monolithic" support and pledging to continue "protecting our people, guarding our homeland's sovereignty and supporting the constitutionally elected president and commander in chief." Meanwhile, Congresswoman Maria Corina Machado, one of the most prominent opposition figures, returned to the country from Peru on Wednesday and led hundreds of protesters in a march through Caracas. □

Deal-making ahead as China president visits France

SYLVIE CORBET

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Chinese President Xi Jinping was the toast of France as he embarked on a state visit — and what better time just days after China ended an anti-dumping, anti-subsidy investigation of French wine.

Deal-making and commemorations of a half-century of French diplomatic ties with Communist China were the order of business during Xi's three-

day visit, part of his European tour.

France wants its relations with China to flourish, not least because of a whopping 25.8 billion-euro (\$35.6 billion) trade deficit with what is now the world's No. 2 economy. That shortfall represents roughly 40 percent of France's total foreign trade deficit.

French officials said the signing of about 50 commercial accords were being lined up. From nuclear energy to aerospace to

agribusiness, and even including a possible sausage deal, President Francois Hollande says they will total about 18 billion euros (\$24.8 billion).

In Paris during the afternoon, Hollande met Xi at a state ceremony and troop review at the Invalides monument, the final resting place of Napoleon.

"My visit to France comes at a particular moment, and will allow for work with ... Hollande and other French leaders to take

stock of 50 years of Sino-French relations, and plan the future together," Xi said following his arrival.

Wednesday will be seen by the French as a step in the right direction, with Chinese automaker Dongfeng signing to a deal to invest 800 million euros (\$1.1 billion) in France's largest carmaker PSA Peugeot Citroen. Meanwhile, Airbus Helicopters and China's Avicorp signed a joint agreement for the production of 1,000 new-gen-

eration helicopters, while China ordered about 70 European Airbus planes.

French officials also want France to increase its market share in China from about 1.5 percent today — noting with no small amount of envy that Germany's is about 5 percent. But many French workers, already worrying about double-digit unemployment rates in France, are fretting about the impact on wages from doing more business with China. □

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World Bank says Russia economy remains volatile

N. VASILYeva

Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP)—The World Bank warned Wednesday that Russia's economy could contract this year if the country is hit with more serious sanctions following its annexation of Crimea.

The organization said in its annual report that it expects the Russian economy to grow 1.1 percent this year if the fall-out from the Crimean crisis is short-lived, but warned of a 1.8 percent fall if Russia is hit with more serious sanctions than those already specified.

So far, the sanctions have been fairly limited and haven't touched on Russia's vital economic interests. The World Bank said Russia's economic problems are not just to do with the recent events in Ukraine. Last year, Russia grew 1.3 percent, its lowest growth in the past 13 years barring the downturn-hit 2009.

The bank blamed the lack of structural reforms for the downturn. In the past, it said the economy's structural deficiencies were "masked by a growth model based on large investment projects ... fueled by sizeable oil revenues."

The developments in Crimea, it added, "compounded the lingering confidence problem into a confidence crisis and more clearly exposed the economy weakness of this growth model."

Investors have certainly grown jittery of late — recent figures suggest that Russia suffered roughly \$70 billion of capital outflow in the first three months of the year, which is more than in all of 2013. □

After Haiyan, Philippines expands crop insurance

TERESA CEROJANO

Associated Press

CALAMBA, Philippines (AP)

— The aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines has added urgency to finding a solution to a longstanding problem: less than 10 percent of farmers have crop insurance, and while its advantages are widely understood, few can afford it.

Raymundo dela Vina, an 81-year-old farmer in Laguna province near Manila, likened raising crops to betting in a lottery: you go against so many odds including pests and an average of 20 typhoons that pummel the country each year, flooding small rice paddies like his. The country's 10.8 million farmers are the second poorest industry after fishermen. Many are tenant tillers who share their harvest with land owners and go into debt to pay for seeds, fertilizer and pest control. Crop insurance is the least of priorities when there is often not even enough money for food.

But the government wants to change that.

Officials and international aid groups are discussing ways to boost resilience to disasters after Haiyan, one of the strongest typhoons on record, killed more than 6,200 people and flat-

tened towns in the central Philippines on Nov. 8. Better protections are vital for the poor who often end up deeper in poverty with every calamity. A World Bank report estimated that natural calamities cut 0.8 percentage point from the country's economic growth rate each year on

are each cropping season is a big help, farmer dela Vina said.

Jovy Bernabe, president of government-owned insurer Philippine Crop Insurance Corp., said the program is being expanded this year, with free policies to be given to 800,000 farmers in the 20 poorest provinces plus



Farmers prepare rice seedlings for planting in Calamba city, Laguna province about 70 kilometers (44 miles) south of Manila, Philippines.

(AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)

average. The proportion of people living in poverty in 2013 may have risen to 26.4 percent from 25.2 percent the previous year despite economic growth of more than 7 percent, according to a government report. Government subsidized insurance that covers 30,000 pesos (\$668) of a farmer's production cost per hect-

six provinces directly hit by Haiyan.

Last year, the agency enrolled for free 224,000 poor farmers who had become landowners under agrarian reform, raising the number insured to 750,000.

Expansion of the crop insurance program, private micro-insurance against calamities for families, and

a proposed disaster risk insurance for towns pegged to measurable factors like rainfall volume are among mechanisms being implemented or studied to brace for future catastrophes.

In dela Vina's case, the crop insurance corporation subsidizes half of his premium. He pays about a third of the cost or 1,108 pesos (\$25) per hectare through a farmers' cooperative while state-run Land Bank of the Philippines takes care of the balance.

About 12 percent of subsistence rice farmers now have crop insurance, a leap from two percent in 2009, Bernabe said. Numbers are lower for farmers planting other crops.

He said 750,000 enrollees is a "good number" compared with previous years. Bernabe said the national government wants local government to jointly subsidize policies to bring down cost in areas where they are not free. It is also wants private insurance companies, farmers' cooperatives and rural banks to get involved.

"Without insurance you just leave everything to God because there are always disasters and your expected harvest could be totally wiped out," said dela Vina. □

Lloyd's of London stands ready to pay on crash

LONDON (AP)—Lloyd's of London, the world's oldest insurance market, says it stands ready to pay out claims for the loss of Malaysian Airlines Flight 370, even as searchers continue to scour the Indian Ocean for wreckage.

It's still far too early to speculate about the cost of the disaster, which will depend in part on what happened

to the plane, said Lloyd's Chairman John Nelson. By way of example, he said it took two to three years to sort out what led to the crash of an Air France plane in 2009. He said the tragedy was compounded by the unusual way in which the disaster unfolded.

"As regrettable as it is, we expect the occasional loss," he said.

Flight 370 was en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing when it vanished early March 8 with 239 people aboard. Although no wreckage has been found, the Malaysian government said this week that satellite data indicates the plane crashed into the Indian Ocean thousands of miles from land. Lloyds, a specialist insurance market,

on Wednesday reported pretax profit of 3.2 billion pounds for last year as it benefited from the fact the world suffered fewer natural disasters.

But Nelson said the aviation segment remained a small portion of their overall business. "We have been insuring airplanes since they were first invented," he said. "This is what we do." □

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Panel: China quotas on metals violate world trade law

DAVID JOLLY

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PARIS - China has broken international trade law by restricting the export of rare earth elements and other metals crucial to modern manufacturing, a World Trade Organization panel said Wednesday. That conclusion opens the possibility that Beijing will face trade sanctions from the U.S., which initially brought the case, the European Union and Japan.

Members of a WTO panel considering the case in Geneva found that the export taxes, quotas and bureaucratic delays Beijing imposes on overseas sales of the minerals artificially raise prices and create shortages for foreign buyers. The panel concluded that "China's export quotas were designed to achieve industrial policy goals" rather than to protect its environment, as Beijing had argued.

China produces more than nine-tenths of the global supply of the strategically important metals, which are essential to a host of modern applications including smartphones, wind turbines, industrial catalysts and high-tech magnets. Prices soared in 2010 after Beijing cut export quotas by about 40 percent, to just over 30,000 tons, saying the restrictions were necessary because mining rare earths creates many environmental hazards.

U.S. and European officials hailed the ruling. Michael B. Froman, the U.S. trade representative, said the trade restrictions had bolstered Chinese industry at the expense of businesses

in other countries, forcing them "to pay as much as three times more than what their Chinese competitors pay for the exact same rare earths."

Karel De Gucht, the European trade commissioner,

the WTO panel last October had indicated that the panel would rule against China.

In a statement Wednesday, the Chinese Commerce Ministry expressed its "regret" at the ruling,

ids used to leach the ores, making farming impossible, while giant tailing ponds full of toxic - and sometimes radioactive - chemicals attest to the fact that the recovery of every pound of rare earth metals entails impartial, reasonable, or transparent," distorting the market in favor of China's domestic industry.

Critics also argued that despite the claims of environmental protection, China was using its monopoly to create a cost advantage for companies operating within its borders; because the price was lower for domestic users, the arrangement induced foreign companies to set up shop in China to be competitive, creating local jobs and transferring technology. The panel ruled against China's arguments on all counts. While it did not rule that nations may not impose quotas to protect scarce resources, it argued that once a commodity is extracted from the ground it should be treated in accordance with the global rules. World trade rules do not prohibit export taxes. But the agreement China signed with other countries when it joined the WTO allowed for only a limited number of such duties and did not include rare earths, the panel noted.

Beijing now has about two months to appeal the case, as do the complainants if they think the outcome is not entirely in their favor. Any challenge would be heard by the Appellate Body, the WTO's permanent appeals tribunal.

China's statement Wednesday said Beijing "is currently assessing the panel report and will follow the WTO dispute settlement procedures to settle this dispute." But it gave no indication of whether it planned to appeal. □



Drums of rare earth elements in a warehouse, in Tianjin, China. China has broken international trade law by restricting the export of rare earth elements and other metals crucial to modern manufacturing, a World Trade Organization panel said on March 26, 2014.

(Sim Chi Yin/The New York Times)

said "China cannot use export restrictions to protect its own industries or give them a helping hand on the global market at the expense of foreign competitors."

The U.S., which is almost totally dependent on China for the metals, filed the case in March 2012, and the EU and Japan joined on Washington's side soon after. They challenged the export restrictions on 17 rare earths, as well as two metals used in steel alloys: molybdenum and tungsten. An interim report by

saying it believed its regulatory measures "are perfectly consistent with the objective of sustainable development promoted by the WTO."

China has amply demonstrated the damage caused at each step of the production process, from mining and refining the metals to disposing of the waste, and Beijing has been shutting down some of the worst-offending producers, among them criminal enterprises. The soil in parts of China is scarred from the concentrated ac-

the creation of hundreds or thousands of pounds of waste.

China had also argued that the export quotas were justified under trade rules allowing exceptions where such steps "relate to the conservation of exhaustible natural resources."

But the complainants argued that the restrictions were inconsistent with China's obligations under the rules of the WTO, which it joined in 2001, because they were handled "in a manner that is not uniform,

LOCAL Aruba TODAY

Loyal Visitors Honored at the Marriott Surf Club



PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a group of loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, at the Marriott Surf Club as Distinguished Visitors.

The symbolic honorary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 consecutive years. The honorees were Mr.

Dave and Mrs. Sherrill Hamman of Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Mr. Mark and Mrs. Sheila Davidson of Ankeny, Florida. The honorees are loyal members of the Marriott Surf Club and they love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the climate, beaches,



restaurants, and being on Aruba and staying at the Surf Club is like being home for them. The certificates were presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with the Hamman family and Ms. Jenny Boekhoudt and Mr. Joop Bangma GM from the Marriott Surf Club. □



Tonight at 7pm:

Artist demonstration with Maria Onni at Caribbean Queen



ORANJESTAD - Maria Onni who is Caribbean Queen for the month of March at the Caribbean Queen store, Palm Beach Plaza Mall, will be showcasing her artistry, live, Thursday evening, from 7pm, just in front of the store where her collection is on display.

Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Maria started art classes when she was 8 years old. As a kid, it was

already evident that Maria was going to be a free spirit artist, so family members always involved her in a variety of artistic expressions, including guitar lessons, sculpting, dance classes...but painting was her thing, she says.

Maria found Aruba when she was 20 years old following her heart and a love story! At the end of five years of experimental-

tion, working in different areas on the Island she found the way to express all of the emotions she felt here, by means of a creative process which was unique to the island.

Her intentions to create a special and authentic souvenir that visitors could take home, made her think about driftwood and the idea of recycling. It felt like magic when one day

she was on the beach looking for driftwood, one piece in particular spoke to her, she saw a face there, as if the wood was in possession of a spirit. She couldn't stop creating thereafter.

Inspired to make different masks of diverse ethnicities she started painting African, Asian, Indian and Mayan masks. She felt that the mix of cultures here invited a fresh approach and she started working on "masks from Aruba."

Overtime she began to incorporate clay to give the masks dimension, she also decorates them with sea glass, shells, seeds, and stones.

The masks are one of a kind, the authentic shapes and the combination of colors make them all unique and special, as if they each have a story to tell... Maria reports that as a muralist, sculptor and stage makeup artist, she found Aruba a great place

to work, with her creativity free-flowing and uninhibited.

In 2012 she started travelling, learning different techniques and finding more inspiration, as she looks forward to keep growing on her amazing personal journey.

Come view Maria's collection through the month of March at Caribbean Queen, and see her in action live, on Thursday, March 27th, from 7pm. The store earmarks a percentage of all sales to the repair of the world, Tikkun Olam, an age-old Kabbalah concept. The funds collected are given quarterly to not-for-profit local organizations, an ongoing effort to do good and serve the community. All the foundations served with donations from the Caribbean Queen Boutique are dedicated to the promotion of art on the island and artisan education. □

Leatherback Season has started!



PALM BEACH - Last Saturday afternoon a hugh sea turtle made her nest in front of Manchebo Beach Hotel. It is the first nest of the season. Normally sea turtles nest at night. They are scared by artificial lights, so we have to leave them in the dark and no flash photography is allowed.

But Saturday more than 100 people could witness the complete nesting process (about two hours). Turtugaruba (the local foundation that protects the sea turtles) informed the onlookers and placed barriers around the nest after the turtle had returned into the sea. The incubation of the eggs will take 60–70 days, so this first nest will probably hatch at the end of May. The Leatherback Sea Turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*) do not live in the Caribbean, but in the Northern part of the Atlantic Ocean. A female returns every 2 till 5 years to lay her eggs on the same beach where she herself was born. This female was nesting on Aruba before, in 2009 and 2011.

The two beautiful pictures of this Leatherback Sea Turtle were made by Armando Goedgedrag.

Info: www.facebook.com/Turtugaruba or Turtle Hotline 592-9393 □

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On The
Beach**

Amy

She is enjoying the warmth of the sun here in Aruba

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CMB

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For us, 2013 was as much a banner year as it was a year full of challenges. At Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V., we aimed to gather our strengths and to support our customers. Our results are a reflection of our people, those same people that are as much our customers as they are our employees, our shareholders, our community and social partners and our fellow citizens of Aruba, all of whom we are proud to share and celebrate our success with. With gratitude, we thank all of Aruba for doing business with us.

HIGHLIGHTS OF CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL POSITION

annual REPORT

2013

CARIBBEAN MERCANTILE BANK N.V.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS IN THOUSANDS OF ARUBAN FLORINS • ooos OMITTED

	2013	2012
Total Assets	1,556,325	1,433,796
Total Customer Deposits	1,113,968	1,191,481
Total Loans and Advances	1,036,719	927,141
Shareholder's Equity	208,822	159,724
Net Profit After Tax	55,546	49,330

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS IN PERCENTAGES (%)

Growth in Total Assets	8.55%
Growth in Total Customer Deposits	-6.51%
Growth in Loans and Advances	11.82%
Growth in Net Profit After Tax	12.60%

OTHER KEY DATA OF THE CMB GROUP

	2013	2012
Staff	291	290
Branches	6	7
Bancomatico ATMs	46	46
Client Accounts	209,369	191,055

INCOME STATEMENT

The income presented in our financial statements represents the total income for all 4 companies operating onshore and international businesses based in Aruba. International business and investment activities are a key source and contributor to the bank's consolidated income. Net Profits after tax in accordance with Central Bank of Aruba's guidelines were AFL. 56 million.

All business areas contributed to these results and the net result after tax grew in 2013 by 12.60%.

From CMB N.V.'s total revenues, 26% went to paying personnel expenses, 18% to paying other operating expenses, 16% to paying taxes, and 40% to net profit, hence an appropriate distribution among all stakeholders.

FINANCIAL POSITION

CMB N.V.'s consolidated total assets at the end of December 2013 totaled AFL. 1,556 million, for an increase of 8.55%.

Our customer deposits showed a decrease of 6.51%.

The total of loans and advances to customers increased by 11.82% over 2012.

At the end of December 2013, the book value of CMB N.V.'s Stockholders' Equity surpassed AFL. 208 million. As a result, CMB N.V. has a stronger capital base and is well positioned for the future. This solid capital base is a key strength that our communities and clients can depend on as we build for the future.

TAXES

CMB N.V. paid AFL. 19.8 million in profit taxes in 2013. This amount combined with employee wage and foreign exchange taxes resulted in CMB N.V. facilitating Land Aruba with amounts in excess of AFL. 38 million in 2013.

EMPLOYMENT

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SPORTS

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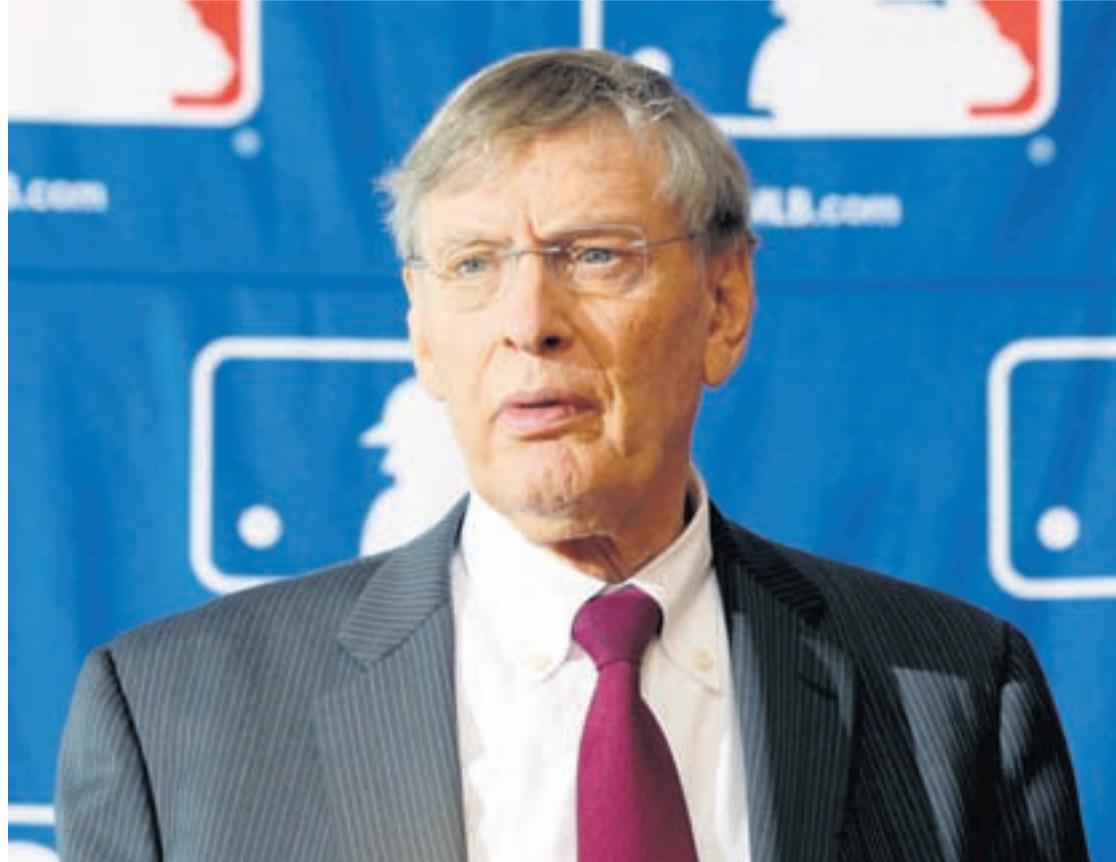
APNewsBreak: MLB hopes for new drug deal this week

By RONALD BLUM

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) - Baseball players and management hope to reach a new drug agreement this week that would increase initial penalties for muscle-building steroids and allow a decrease of suspensions for some positive tests caused by unintentional use, people familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press. For future suspensions, the deal also would eliminate the loophole allowing Alex Rodriguez to earn almost \$3 million during his season-long ban, the people said. They spoke on condition of anonymity in recent days because talks are ongoing.

The sides hope to reach an agreement by Sunday, when the Los Angeles Dodgers open the U.S. portion of the major league schedule at the San Diego Padres. While



In this Aug. 15, 2013, file photo, Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig speaks during a news conference in Cooperstown, N.Y. Associated Press

the lengths have not been finalized, a person involved with the talks said Wednesday the most likely penalties would be about 80 games for an initial testing violation and a season-long ban for a second. "It will be a significant deterrent because players will know they're not going to just easily walk back into a lineup," Travis Tygart, chief executive officer of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, said in a telephone interview. "It probably is the best policy in professional sports."

For use of a limited group of substances, the sides were discussing giving the arbitration panel that hears appeals grievances the authority to reduce suspensions by as much as 50 percent if the player proves the positive test was caused by unintentional use, the person said.

Continued on Page 22



Dominika Cibulkova, of Slovakia, celebrates after defeating Agnieszka Radwanska, of Poland, at the Sony Open Tennis tournament in Key Biscayne, Fla., Wednesday, March 26, 2014. Cibulkova won 3-6, 7-6 (5), 6-3. Associated Press

STEVEN WINE

AP Sports Writer

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AP)

— Novak Djokovic ben-

fited from an erroneous call in the pivotal game Wednesday to beat Andy Murray 7-5, 6-3 in the quar-

Djokovic beats Murray in Sony Open quarterfinals

terfinals of the Sony Open. The disputed point occurred at the start of the 12th game, with Murray serving at 5-6. Djokovic charged forward to volley a short ball and hit it for a winner.

Murray argued — and TV replays confirmed — he should have been awarded the point because Djokovic's racket was on the other side of the net when he hit the ball. Chair umpire Damian Steiner declined to change his call, and such rulings can't be appealed for video review.

A flustered Murray then committed unforced backhand errors on the next three points to lose the game and the set. He took a lead in the second set but lost the final four games and the last 10 points.

Afterward, Murray downplayed the bad call.

"I'm not angry," he said. "It maybe had a slight bearing on that game, but I was still up a break in the second set."

Djokovic, bidding for his fourth Key Biscayne title, will play Friday against the winner of the match Wednesday night between Roger Federer and Kei Nishikori.

Dominika Cibulkova erased three match points in the second set — one when a call was overturned via replay — and beat Agnieszka Radwanska 3-6, 7-6 (5), 6-3. In Thursday's semifinals, the No. 10-seeded Cibulkova will play the winner of the match Wednesday night between No. 2 Li Na and No. 11 Caroline Wozniacki. Murray won the Key Biscayne title in 2009 and

2013 but wasn't at his best against Djokovic. The Scot committed five double-faults and 32 unforced errors, including a flurry down the stretch.

He took a 3-2 lead in the second set with his only service break, then double-faulted twice to give it right back. But it all might have been different if not for the much-discussed call late in the first set. After Djokovic won the disputed point, an irritated Murray walked to the net to discuss the matter with his opponent, who smiled and shrugged.

Djokovic had won praise for his sportsmanship when he conceded a point following an erroneous call in his match Tuesday, but this time he left the verdict to the umpire.

Continued on Page 20

College athletes can unionize, federal agency says

By MICHAEL TARM
Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) -- In a stunning ruling that could revolutionize a college sports industry worth billions of dollars and have dramatic repercussions at schools coast to coast, a federal agency said Wednesday that football players at Northwestern University can create the nation's first union of college athletes.

The decision by a regional director of the National Labor Relations Board answered the question at the heart of the debate over the unionization bid: Do football players who receive full scholarships to the Big Ten school qualify as employees under federal law and therefore can legally unionize?

Peter Sung Ohr, the NLRB regional director, said in a 24-page decision that the players "fall squarely" within the broad definition of

employee.

Pro-union activists cheered as they learned of the ruling.

"It's like preparing so long for a big game and then when you win - it is pure joy," said former UCLA linebacker Ramogi Huma, the designated president of Northwestern's would-be football players' union.

An employee is regarded by law as someone who, among other things, receives compensation for a service and is under the strict, direct control of managers. In the case of the Northwestern players, coaches are the managers and scholarships are a form of compensation, Ohr concluded.

The Evanston, Ill., university argued that college athletes, as students, do not fit in the same category as factory workers, truck drivers and other unionized workers. The school an-

nounced plans to appeal to labor authorities in Washington, D.C.

Supporters of the union bid argued that the university ultimately treats football as more important than academics for scholarship players. Ohr sided with the players.

"The record makes clear that the employer's scholarship players are identified and recruited in the first instance because of their football prowess and not because of their academic achievement in high school," Ohr wrote. He also noted that among the evidence presented by Northwestern, "no examples were provided of scholarship players being permitted to miss entire practices and/or games to attend their studies."

The ruling described how the life of a football player at Northwestern is far more regimented than that of a



this Jan. 28, 2014, file photo, Northwestern quarterback Kain Colter, right, speaks while College Athletes Players Association President Ramogi Huma listens during a news conference in Chicago. In a Wednesday, March 26, 2014, landmark ruling, a federal agency has given football players at Northwestern University the green light to unionize.

typical student, down to requirements about what they can eat and whether they can live off campus or purchase a car. At times, players put 50 or 60 hours a week into football, Ohr added.

Alan Cubbage, Northwestern's vice president for university relations, said in a statement that while the school respects "the NLRB process and the regional director's opinion, we disagree with it." □

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NBA Capsules

Nowitzki scores 32 as Mavs beat Thunder 128-119

DALLAS (AP) — Dirk Nowitzki scored seven of his 32 points in overtime, leading the Dallas Mavericks to a 128-119 victory over the Oklahoma City Thunder on Tuesday night.

Nowitzki also had 10 rebounds and six assists. In Dallas' loss to Brooklyn on Sunday, he was 2 for 12 from the field in his worst shooting performance of the season. Kevin Durant led Oklahoma City with 43 points. He has scored at least 25 in 36 consecutive games in the longest such streak since Michael Jordan's 40-game run during the 1986-87 season.

Dallas had seven players score in double figures. Jose Calderon went 6 for 8 from 3-point range and finished with 22 points.

Russell Westbrook scored 23 for Oklahoma City. All of his points came in regulation, when he played 31:50. He added another minute in overtime. Westbrook is limited to 30 to 32 minutes per game because of his oft-injured right knee.

The Mavericks scored the first five points of the extra period on two free throws



Dallas Mavericks forward Dirk Nowitzki (41) shoots against Oklahoma City Thunder guard Derek Fisher during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, March 25, 2014, in Dallas. The Mavericks won 128-119 in overtime.

Associated Press

by Nowitzki and a 3-pointer by Calderon. They never trailed again.

CAVALIERS 102, RAPTORS

100

CLEVELAND (AP) — Dion Waiters scored 24 points and Luol Deng added 19

as Cleveland prevented Toronto from getting closer to a playoff spot. Dion Waiters scored 24 points and Luol Deng added 19 as the Cleveland Cavaliers prevented Toronto from getting closer to a playoff spot with a 102-100 win over the Raptors on Tuesday night.

The Cavs blew a 21-point lead, but made just enough plays down the stretch to snap a five-game losing streak at home. They did it without All-Star point guard Kyrie Irving, who missed his fifth straight game with a strained biceps tendon.

Kyle Lowry scored 22 for the Raptors, who had a chance to tie it in the final seconds but guard Greivis Vasquez lost his footing and committed a turnover with 1.9 seconds left.

Toronto led 95-94 with 6:45 remaining, but went just 1 of 9 from the floor and scored five points the rest of the way.

Tristan Thompson added 15 points and 13 rebounds for Cleveland.

MAGIC 95, TRAIL BLAZERS 85

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — Tobias Harris had 25 points and 11 rebounds as Orlando stopped a nine-game losing streak.

Nik Vucevic added 22 points and 10 boards for the Magic, who led by just eight at the half but used scoring spurts in the third and fourth quarters to put the game away. Victor Oladipo had 13 points and six assists.

Robin Lopez led Portland with 20 points and 13 rebounds.

The Blazers, who entered the night in fifth place in the West, have lost three straight. They were without forward LaMarcus Aldridge, who missed his seventh consecutive game with a lower back contusion.

The Magic closed the third quarter on an 11-2 run and increased their lead to 19 in the opening minutes of the fourth.

LAKERS 127, KNICKS 96

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Xavier Henry scored 22 points and Nick Young hit five 3-pointers while scoring 20 points as the Los Angeles Lakers dropped a franchise-record 51 points in the third quarter of their victory over the New York Knicks.

Kent Bazemore scored 18 points as the Lakers won consecutive games for the first time in more than three weeks with a phenomenal offensive effort against the Knicks, who have lost two straight after an eight-game winning streak.

Knicks President Phil Jackson watched his new team and his former club from a luxury suite high above the court.

Carmelo Anthony scored 29 points for the Knicks, who couldn't stop the Lakers' patchwork roster from hitting 18 3-pointers in the opener of New York's five-game West Coast road trip.

In other NBA games it was Orlando 95, Portland 85; Cleveland 102, Toronto 100; Dallas 128, Oklahoma City 119, OT; and L.A. Lakers 127, New York 96.

Sony Open

Continued from Page 18

A sideline reporter told Murray that TV replays showed he was correct about the call, and during the ensuing changeover he questioned Steiner.

"His racket was over the net," Murray said. "It's quite clear. You can see it on the replay."

"I have to make a decision at the moment," Steiner replied. Any hard feelings on Murray's part didn't carry over after the match, when he shook hands with Djokovic and Steiner.

"It's a hard one for the umpire to call," Murray said. "Just frustrating."

Cibulkova won despite losing her serve 10 times, double-faulting eight times and committing 51 unforced errors. There were 11 breaks in the first 12 games of the match.

Cibulkova collapsed to her back in jubilation when Radwanska's final shot sailed out. The runner-up at the Australian Open in January, Cibulkova advanced to the Key Biscayne semifinals for the first time.

Former No. 1 Martina Hin-



Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, returns the ball to Andy Murray, of Britain, at the Sony Open Tennis tournament in Key Biscayne, Fla., Wednesday, March 26, 2014. Djokovic defeated Murray 7-5, 6-3.

gis teamed with Sabine Lisicki and overcame three match points against Ana-bell Medina Garrigues and Yaroslava Shvedova to win 3-6, 7-6 (7), 10-7 and reach the semifinals in women's doubles. □

Backes scores hat trick as Blues top Leafs 5-3

TORONTO (AP) — David Backes completed a hat trick with an empty-net goal to lead the St. Louis Blues to a 5-3 victory Tuesday that sent the Toronto Maple Leafs to their sixth straight loss.

NHL Capsules

T.J. Oshie and former Leafs forward Alex Steen also scored for St. Louis, which passed Boston for the most points in the NHL with 105. Ryan Miller made 21 saves to improve to 32-15-3 in his career against Toronto. The Blues have won 10 of 13 games since acquiring Miller and forward Steve Ott from Buffalo before the trade deadline. Joffrey Lupul, Carl Gunnarsson and James van Riemsdyk scored for Toronto, which dropped out of a playoff spot for the first time since Jan. 14, coupled with Washington's shootout loss to Los Angeles. The loss ruined the return of Toronto goalie Jonathan Bernier, who made 44 saves in his first game since reinjuring his groin on March 13.

COYOTES 3, PENGUINS 2

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Thomas Greiss stopped 23 shots — including all 15 he faced over the final two periods — as the Phoenix Coyotes edged the sloppy Pittsburgh Penguins.

David Moss, Antoine Vermette and Mikkel Boedker scored for the Coyotes, who never trailed while picking up two vital points in the chase for the final playoff spot in the Western Conference. Greiss was sharp and received plenty of help from his defense as Phoenix rebounded a night after losing starting goaltender Mike Smith indefinitely with a right leg injury in a loss to the New York Rangers on Monday night.

Jussi Jokinen and Taylor Pyatt scored for Pittsburgh. Marc-Andre Fleury made 26 saves, but the Penguins looked lifeless at times without center Evgeni Malkin, who is out 2-3 weeks with a foot injury.

KINGS 5, CAPITALS 4

WASHINGTON (AP) — Anze Kopitar and Jeff Carter scored in the shootout as the Los Angeles Kings came back after allowing Alex Ovechkin's two early power-play goals to beat the Washington Capitals.

The shootout score was 2-0, because Kings goalie Jonathan Quick caught Eric Fehr's attempt, after rookie forward Evgeny Kuznetsov whiffed on his opening shot for Washington.

Kuznetsov had tied the game with 41.5 seconds left in regulation with his first NHL goal. After trailing 2-0 only 7½ minutes in, then 3-1 entering the third period, the Kings wound up winning their seventh consecutive road game. They also have seven victories in a row over Washington.

Mike Richards, Dwight King, Marian Gaborik and Dustin Brown scored for the Kings in regulation.

ISLANDERS 5, HURRICANES 4

RALEIGH, North Carolina (AP) — Colin McDonald had two goals and an assist, and Matt Martin also scored twice for the New York Islanders, who held on to beat the Carolina Hurricanes. McDonald scored both of his goals in New York's four-goal first period. Cal Clutterbuck and Martin also scored in the burst that produced four goals in a span of 7:15. The Islanders led 4-0 in the wild matchup of the bottom two teams in the Metropolitan Division. A combined 20 players had a point. Andrei Loktionov had a goal and an assist, Jeff Skinner and Alexander Semin each scored power-play goals, and Nathan Gerbe added a goal for Carolina.

CANADIENS 2, SABRES 0

MONTREAL (AP) — Carey Price made 24 saves and Max Pacioretty and Daniel Briere scored third-period goals as the Montreal Canadiens earned a victory against the Buffalo Sabres. Pacioretty's goal was the 100th of his career as Montreal extended its winning streak to three and won

for the sixth time in seven games. The Sabres have one win in their past 10 games. They played their fourth game of a five-game road trip that ends Thursday in Nashville.

PANTHERS 3, SENATORS 2, SO

SUNRISE, Florida (AP) — Vincent Trocheck and Brandon Pirri scored in a shootout to lift the Florida Panthers past the Ottawa Senators.

Trocheck also scored in regulation and Sean Bergenheim scored a goal for the Panthers. Roberto Luongo made 37 saves.

Clarke MacArthur and Mark Stone scored for the Senators and Robin Lehner stopped 39 shots. Kyle Turris scored in the shootout for Ottawa, but Luongo turned aside attempts by Jason Spezza and Milan Michalek.

The Panthers snapped a three-game losing streak. The Senators have lost nine of 10.

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BLUE JACKETS 4, RED WINGS 2

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Cam Atkinson scored a goal confirmed by video replay in the third period, and Ryan Johansen added an empty-netter for his second of the game to lead the Columbus Blue Jackets over the Detroit Red Wings. □



Toronto Maple Leafs goalie Jonathan Bernier gets scored on by St. Louis Blues forward David Backes during the first period of an NHL hockey game Tuesday, March 25, 2014, in Toronto.

Associated Press

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2D VERSION
MON - THURS 4:50 | 7:45
FRI 4:50 | 7:45 | 10:40
SAT 2:00 | 4:50 | 7:45 | 10:40
SUN & HOL 2:00 | 4:50 | 7:45

SON OF GOD
DIOGO MORGADO | SEBASTIAN KNAPP
2D VERSION
MON - THURS 5:45 | 8:45
FRI 5:45 | 8:45 | 10:40
SAT 2:45 | 5:45 | 8:45 | 10:40
SUN & HOL 2:45 | 5:45 | 8:45

DIVERGENT
SHAILENE WOODLEY | THEO JAMES
2D VERSION
MON - THURS 6:00 | 9:00
FRI 6:00 | 9:00
SAT 3:00 | 6:00 | 9:00
SUN & HOL 3:00 | 6:00 | 9:00

NEED FOR SPEED
AARON PAUL | DOMINIC COOPER
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MON - THURS 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20
FRI 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20
SAT 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20
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R&A asks members to allow women to join

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

The Royal & Ancient Golf Club, exclusively for men since it was founded 260 years ago at St. Andrews, will vote in September on whether women can join the club.

"It's an exciting day for the club," R&A club secretary Peter Dawson said Wednesday. "There will be quite a bit of internal discussion between now and the September vote. It's a matter for the members to determine. All indications are very supportive."

A statement from the club said that all committees were "strongly in favor of the rule change" and asked members to go along.

The move was hailed by British sports minister Helen Grant, who was hopeful a favorable vote would encourage other single-sex golf clubs to follow suit.

Dawson, however, said the vote would have no bearing on whether the British Open is played on links courses that exclude

women as members — Royal St. George's, Royal Troon and Muirfield, where Phil Mickelson won last year. The Open returns to Troon in 2016.

"I don't want you to think there's any connection between this vote and these issues," Dawson said. "What other clubs choose to do in the UK is not connected to this. ... To be entirely honest, we're not here to put pressure on other clubs that have supported The Open Championship and other R&A championships."

The Royal & Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews has about 2,400 members from around the world and dates to 1754. The clubhouse is among the most famous buildings in golf, overlooking the Old Course at St. Andrews.

Augusta National for years was the symbol of men-only golf clubs because it hosts The Masters every April. The club announced in August 2012 that it had invited women to join for the first time — former Secretary of State Condoleezza

Rice and South Carolina financier Darla Moore.

Even though Augusta National went 80 years without a female member, it had no policy that barred women from joining. The R&A had such a policy, and that's what will be voted on in September.

Dawson said he did not think Augusta National's decision had any bearing on the R&A Golf Club.

"We noted what happened at Augusta," he said. "They have their own procedure of doing things. We are doing this because of our governance role."

He also said the R&A did not feel pressure from any of its corporate sponsors, who were subjected to the debate at the British Open. "You can always ask that question: 'Why now? Why not 10 years ago?' The R&A have been considering this. It's been on our agenda, on our radar, for quite some time," Dawson said. "The feeling is as society changes, as sport changes, as golf changes, it's something the R&A needs to do, and is doing now as



This is a Sunday, Aug. 5, 2007 file photo of tournament winner and world number one Mexico's Lorena Ochoa as she tees off from the 18th with the St Andrews clubhouse in the background, during the Women's British Open golf tournament on the Old Course at the Royal and Ancient Golf Club in St Andrews, Scotland.

Associated Press.

being forward-looking as we can."

The club and the group that runs The Open are separate entities.

For years, the men-only Royal & Ancient was in charge of the Rules of Golf for every country in the world except for the United States and Mexico, which are governed by the USGA. And it operated the British Open, the oldest championship in golf.

Ten years ago, the administrative duties were

split off into a corporate structure that is called "The R&A," of which Dawson is the chief executive. That's the group in charge of the Rules of Golf and organizing The Open and other R&A championships.

And while "The R&A" has female employees, its committee and board roles are populated by members of the Royal & Ancient Golf Club. So there are no women in leadership roles when it comes to rules and championship golf. □

MLB

Continued from page 18

"What we're all here for it to rid sports of the intentional cheats, those who are intending to defraud both the fans and their fellow teammates, the integrity of competition," Tygart said. "You want to have provisions in place that allow for whether there's an inadvertent or a truly non-intentional situation which may arise."

Since the 2006 season, the Major League Baseball's drug agreement has called for a 50-game suspension for a first positive steroids test, a 100-game ban for a second and a lifetime penalty for a third. Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig called for tougher penalties last March, and then-union head Michael Weiner said players would consider them for 2014.

Weiner died in November and was succeeded by



In a Aug. 20, 2013 file photo, New York Yankees' Alex Rodriguez singles during the sixth inning of the baseball game against the Toronto Blue Jays at Yankee Stadium in New York.

Associated Press

former All-Star Tony Clark, who has led the negotiations. Major League Baseball's investigation of the Biogenesis of America anti-aging clinic led to 14 suspensions last summer, including a 65-game penalty for former NL MVP Ryan Braun of Milwaukee and a 211-game ban for Rodriguez, which was reduced to 162 games in January by

an arbitrator.

The section covering violations not related to positive tests, which was used by Selig in the Biogenesis case, will be clarified but still will allow discipline for "just cause." Many players have advocated stiffer penalties as a deterrent. Arizona pitcher Brad Ziegler spoke out after Jhonny Peralta, who served a 50-

game suspension, agreed in November to a \$53 million, four-year contract with St. Louis.

"We thought 50 games would be a deterrent. Obviously it's not. So we are working on it again," he tweeted then. "It pays to cheat... Thanks, owners, for encouraging PED use."

Some players said suspensions should lead to larger monetary losses. San Diego Padres outfielder Will Venable maintained last summer "somehow having to forfeit or void your contract that you're under is something that needs to be the main focus of the penalties." But for the majority of players, that would go too far. "I'd venture to guess that even though there are concerns on a number of levels, that we will never end up in a world where player contracts are voided as a result," Clark told the AP during a January interview.

Addressing positives

caused by inadvertent use was a factor in the talks.

Philadelphia infielder Freddy Galvis was suspended for 50 games in June 2012 for a Clostebol Metabolite, which he later claimed was contained in a foot cream he used. Reliever Guillermo Mota, then with San Francisco, was suspended for 100 games in May 2012 after taking a cough syrup with Clenbuterol.

The new deal also will state that a player receives none of his salary during a season-long suspension. The current deal said a player loses as many days' pay as games he is suspended. Since players are paid over a 183-day season this year, arbitrator Fredric Horowitz ruled Rodriguez was entitled to 21-183rds of his \$25 million salary, or \$2,868,852. "That's fantastic," Tygart said. "You hit them in the pocketbook, and that's really where the cheaters are most deterred from attempting to steal money from the other players." □

Sober smartphone app aids boozers' recovery: Study

LINDSEY TANNER
AP Medical Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — A smartphone app for recovering alcoholics that includes a panic button and sounds an alert when they get too close to taverns helped keep some on the wagon, researchers who developed the tool found.

The sober app studied joins a host of others that serve as electronic shoulder angels, featuring a variety of options for trying to prevent alcoholics and drug addicts from relapsing.

Adults released from in-patient alcoholism treatment centers who got free sober smartphones reported fewer drinking days and more overall abstinence than those who got the usual follow-up support.

The results were based on patients' self-reporting on whether they resumed drinking, a potential limitation. Still, addiction experts say the immediacy of smartphone-based help could make them a useful tool in fighting relapse.

Mark Wiitala, 32, took part in the study and says the app helped save his life. He said the most helpful feature allowed him to connect to a network of peers who'd gone through the same recovery program. The app made them immediately accessible for an encouraging text or phone call when he needed an emotional boost.

"It's an absolutely amazing tool," said Wiitala. He said he's continued to use it even though the study ended.

The study was published online Wednesday in JAMA Psychiatry.

It involved 271 adults followed for a year after in-patient treatment for

alcoholism at one of several U.S. centers. They were randomly assigned to get a sober smartphone app for eight months plus usual follow-up treatment — typically referral to a self-help group — or usual follow-up alone.

The app includes a feature asking periodic questions by text or voicemail about how patients are doing. If enough answers seem worrisome, the system automatically notifies a counselor who can then offer help.

The panic button can be programmed to notify peers who are nearest to the patient when the button is pushed. It also offers links to relaxation techniques to calm the patient while waiting for help.

"We've been told that makes a big difference," said David Gustafson, the lead author and director of the Center for Health Enhancement Systems Studies at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He's among developers of the app, nicknamed A-CHESS after the center. Gustafson said it is being commercially developed and is not yet available.

Differences in abstinence from drinking between the two groups didn't show up until late in the study. At eight months, 78 percent of the smartphone users reported no drinking within the previous 30 days, versus 67 percent of the other patients. At 12 months, those numbers increased slightly in the smartphone group and decreased slightly in the others.

Smartphone patients also had fewer "risky" drinking days per month than the others. The study average was almost 1½ days for the

smartphone group versus almost three days for the others. Risky drinking was defined as having more than four drinks over two hours for men and more than three drinks for women.

The results for smartphone users were comparable to what has been seen with standard follow-up counseling or anti-addiction medication, said Daniel Falk a scientist-administrator at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, which helped pay for the study.

He noted that alcohol abuse affects about 18 million Americans and that only about 25 percent who get treatment are able to remain abstinent for at least a year afterward.

Scientists are looking at new ways to try to improve those statistics.

"There is increasing excitement regarding technology-based tools in substance use treatment, prevention and education," said Dr. Gail Basch, director of the addiction medicine program at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago.

Basch, who wasn't involved in the study, said proven methods for helping prevent relapse include patient monitoring



This screen grab provided by the Center for Health Enhancement Systems Studies (CHESS) at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, Wis., shows the A-CHESS app.

Associated Press

and support from family and peers.

"A stand-alone mobile app may not be the answer, but one can see how it could fit

in nicely," she said. "A real-time tool, as well as reminders throughout the day, could be very helpful for a recovering brain." □

Native Hawaiians protest name of STD 'Hula' app

HONOLULU (AP) — A new dating app designed to provide proof someone is free from sexually transmitted diseases is drawing criticism from Native Hawaiians.

An online petition is asking for the "Hula" app to change its name.

Hula's Facebook page includes a post apologizing for offending the Hawaiian community: "We are in the process of learning more from your community, discussing internally and hope to address your concerns shortly."

The company's website says Hula is meant to "pro-

vide access to the information you need to make well-informed sexual health decisions."

The three college students who started the petition say they are not opposed to the app's functions but don't want to see the hula dance — a beloved cultural art form — exploited.

"My culture is more than a tourist destination," said Kelly Luis, a student at Columbia University. "It is more than a place to go for the summer. It's more than just sexy hula girls on the beach. There is a culture there."

As of Wednesday, nearly

700 people signed the petition at change.org.

The petition notes that the arrival of Europeans exposed Native Hawaiians to diseases such as gonorrhea and syphilis.

It's not clear why the app is named Hula. It was originally called Qpid.me, but the name changed about six months ago.

Nani Kauka, a hula teacher from Kailua, said this is another example of the Hawaii culture being exploited and misunderstood.

"I don't like it," she said. "Why don't they call it ball or jazz?" □



Technology stocks lead a broad market decline

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market continued its recent pattern of one step forward, one step back. After starting the day higher following an encouraging report on orders for manufactured goods, stocks drifted lower in afternoon trading Wednesday and gave up their gains from a day earlier. Facebook led the technology sector lower as investors gave the company's latest acquisition the thumbs-down. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell the most in two weeks and is now flat for the year. Investors are waiting for a catalyst that will either push the market higher or cause a sustained sell-off. Many anticipate that the stock market will resume its upward trajectory later in the year as the economy strengthens following an unusually harsh winter.

"We're going through this back and forth, I would call it a consolidation phase, digesting the huge gains we've had," said David Lafferty, chief market strategist at Natixis Global Asset Management. "Most of the movement in stocks will tend to be in the latter half



King Digital Entertainment CEO and founder Riccardo Zacconi second left, celebrates as his company, the maker of Candy Crush Saga and Farm Heroes Saga, rings the opening bell of the New York Stock Exchange, before its IPO, Wednesday, March 26, 2014. The maker of the hit game "Candy Crush Saga" flopped in its market debut.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

of the year."

The S&P 500 fell 13.06 points, or 0.7 percent, to 1,852.56. The index is up 0.2 percent for the year, after rising almost 30 percent in 2013. The Dow Jones industrial average lost 98.89 points, or 0.6 percent, to 16,268.99. The technology-heavy Nasdaq composite fell more

than the other indexes, giving up 60.69 points, or 1.4 percent, to 4,173.58. Facebook was one of the biggest losers.

The social media network slumped \$4.51, or 6.9 percent, to \$60.38 after announcing a \$2 billion acquisition of virtual reality company Oculus late Mon-

day. It was Facebook's second big acquisition in as many months. Last month the company announced that it would pay \$19 billion for messaging startup WhatsApp. Investors may be questioning whether the returns on those investments will ultimately justify the big outlays, said Law-

rence Creatura, a portfolio manager at Federated Investors.

Another loser in the technology sector was King Digital Entertainment.

The online games company, which makes the popular "Candy Crush Saga," slumped on its first day of trading. The company raised \$499.5 million in an initial public offering. The company's stock fell \$3.50, or 15.6 percent, to \$19 on its first day of trading.

The stock market opened higher after a report showed that orders to U.S. factories for long-lasting manufactured goods rose in February by the largest amount since November, 2.2 percent.

Demand for airplanes and automobiles drove the gains, according to the Commerce Department report. Last month's rise in durable goods orders followed a 1.3 percent drop in January.

"The bigger issue right now is whether or not growth in the United States is going to reaccelerate as the year goes on," Paul Karos, portfolio manager at Whitebox mutual funds. "We are assuming a bounce back after this week first quarter." □

Political instability, weather spur wheat prices

ROXANA HEGEMAN
Associated Press

WICHITA, Kansas (AP) — Political instability in Ukraine — coupled with potential freeze damage to winter wheat in the United States and a deepening drought in some major wheat producing countries — are conspiring to significantly drive up wheat prices, economists say.

U.S. Wheat Associates, the industry's trade group, said in a recent report that concern over the political situation in Ukraine — which supplies 6 percent of the world's wheat export market — was one of the factors for the price spikes. Crimea accounted last year for about 7 percent of Ukraine's grain exports. The Black Sea region is one of the world's major wheat

producing areas, with Russian wheat alone accounting for almost 11 percent of the world's export market. But the group's market analyst, Casey Chumrau, also said in her report that weather worries were the primary fuel for a 15 percent increase in wheat futures prices for hard red winter wheat during just 13 trading days at the Kansas City Board of Trade. Droughts in some major wheat growing countries and potential freeze damage stemming from subzero temperatures that hit the U.S. plains in January is now showing up. "We are certainly not downplaying the political unrest," Chumrau said in a phone interview Tuesday. "There is potential for market disruption in the future, but at this point it is market

speculation."

While the down-the-road effects of the higher prices on consumers is uncertain, U.S. farmers are poised to cash in on the higher prices. In January hard red winter wheat for May delivery on the commodity futures market was trading at \$6.05 a bushel. It is now fetching almost \$8 a bushel. (One bushel of wheat is 27 kilograms or 60 pounds).

Chumrau noted that recent reports from the Ukrainian Agriculture Ministry show no indication grain shipments have been affected so far. A more pressing concern is drought in the Black Sea region, with parts of Russia and Ukraine reporting dry conditions this spring.

In four of the last six years, the world has had record wheat production and re-

cord wheat consumption, and there is still plenty of wheat around to meet that consumer demand, she said.

"Still the specter of potential conflict and upheaval in that part of the world is probably what is affecting at least the worries of the market, as much as the current actual impact," said Dan O'Brien, a specialist in grain markets at Kansas State University.

Both market analysts agree, however, that the drought conditions in the U.S. southern plains is also a major driver in the recent uptick in wheat prices as winter wheat breaks dormancy and needs soil moisture to grow.

"We have problems in the winter wheat belt," O'Brien said, adding there are

reports about damage caused by the frigid temperatures in January, when there was little protective snow cover on the ground. Rainfall has been sparse so far this spring.

About two-thirds of the U.S. wheat belt — an area that includes Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, eastern Colorado and west-central Nebraska — is in a drought, said Don Keeney, agricultural meteorologist with MDA Weather Services. Although the outlook calls for some rain in the southern plains the first week in April, those are not expected to be heavy and will help crop conditions "only a little bit," he said.

Wheat is breaking dormancy across the plains, but cool temperatures have mostly slowed growth. □

'Candy Crush' maker's IPO falls in debut

BARBARA ORTUTAY
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A crush it isn't.

Wall Street is giving King Digital, the company behind the popular mobile game "Candy Crush Saga," the cold shoulder in its public trading debut.

King's stock priced at \$22.50 on Tuesday, valuing the company at \$7.1 billion.

But it opened on Wednesday at \$20.50, down almost 9 percent. Its shares lost more ground by the day's close, falling more than 15 percent.

King Digital Entertainment PLC had \$1.88 billion in revenue last year.

That's more than 10 times its 2012 revenue of \$164.4 million.

But some analysts have questioned whether King would be able to repeat the success of "Candy Crush," which has been far more successful than any of its other games. Its other top games include "Pet Rescue Saga" and "Farm Heroes Saga."

"It's a one-hit-wonder," said Francis Gaskins, director of research for Equities.com and president of IPO-desktop.com.

"The history of game companies is that none of them can prove that they can consistently introduce new products to grow revenue. They say they can, but they can't."

"Candy Crush" has been immensely popular but Gaskins said it is a maturing product that consumers are growing tired of. He pointed to a slowdown in revenue and profit between its last two quarters as an indicator. Its current quarter wraps up Monday and he thinks investors may be anticipating another dip in revenue. He suggested the company may have fared better if it had gone public in September at its peak.

King's debut has drawn comparisons to another game maker, Zynga Inc. Zynga had a much-ballyhooed IPO in late 2011. □

US blocks Citigroup from raising dividends

MARCY GORDON
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Citigroup cannot raise its dividend or buy back its own stock because it needs better plans to cope with a severe recession, the Federal Reserve ruled Wednesday, a disappointing rever-

in parts of its global operations, should they come under economic stress.

Citi said it asked the Fed for permission to buy back \$6.4 billion in shares through the first quarter of next year, and to raise its dividend to 5 cents each quarter. Citi CEO Michael Corbat

ings, RBS Citizens Financial Group, Santander Holdings USA and Zions Bancorp. The central bank, however, approved requests outright from the other 25 tested banks, which included JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo and Morgan Stanley, in addition to Bank

Raising dividends costs money. The regulators don't want banks to deplete their capital reserves, making them vulnerable in another recession. Buybacks also are aimed at helping shareholders. By reducing the number of a company's outstanding shares, earnings per share can increase.

The announcement Wednesday follows last week's results of the Fed's annual "stress tests." The central bank determined that the U.S. banking industry is better able to withstand a major economic downturn than at any time since the financial crisis struck in 2008. The Fed said that only one of the 30 biggest banks in the country needed to take more steps to shore up its capital base. That bank was Zions.

Citigroup was blocked from raising its dividend in 2012, too, after failing its stress test. Before the financial crisis, its dividend peaked at \$5.40 per quarter in 2007.

After eliminating its dividend altogether in 2009, it reinstated a payout in June 2011 at a token penny per quarter, where it remains now.

Citigroup and the other big Wall Street banks, as well as hundreds of others, were bailed out by the government during the crisis. The banking industry has been recovering steadily since then, with overall profits rising and banks starting to lend more freely. The banks have mostly repaid the taxpayer bailouts. □



A person walks past a Citibank location, in Philadelphia. Citigroup cannot raise its dividend or buy back its own stock because it needs better plans to cope with a severe recession, the Federal Reserve ruled Wednesday, March 26, 2014.

(AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

sal for one of the nation's largest banks.

The Fed also rejected the capital plans of four other big banks as part of its so-called "stress tests," an annual check-up of the nation's 30 biggest financial institutions.

The Fed said that the capital plans of Citigroup fell short in some areas, including its ability to forecast revenues and losses

said the company was "deeply disappointed" by the Fed decision. The dividend and buyback would have been a "modest level of capital" for shareholders, and Citi still would have exceeded requirements for its financial health, he said in a written statement. As with Citigroup, the Fed said it found deficiencies in the capital plans of HSBC North America Hold-

of America and Goldman Sachs.

The dividends and share buybacks that the Fed was weighing are important to ordinary investors, and banks. The banks know that their investors suffered big losses in the financial crisis, and they are eager to reward them. Some shareholders, especially retirees, rely on dividends for a portion of their income.

Levi Strauss to eliminate about 800 jobs

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Levi Strauss & Co. will eliminate about 800 jobs, almost 20 percent of its non-retail and non-manufacturing employees, over the next 12 to 18 months.

The privately held company said that its restructuring plan will help it become more competitive, lower costs and improve its financial health.

Last month, the company said that its fourth-quarter

gross profit weakened because it had to increase markdowns due to a slower holiday season and softness in its Levi's juniors and misses businesses.

Levi Strauss said Wednesday that the cuts will primarily be management positions across the world. It is also getting rid of what it considers duplicate roles. Levi Strauss, which also makes the Dockers and Denizen brands, said that fi-

nal plans will vary by country, and estimates for headcount and the timing of the job cuts may change.

The company's products are sold in about 2,800 retail stores and shop-in-shops globally, as well as online.

The job cuts are part of the first phase of a restructuring plan that is expected to result in about \$75 million to \$100 million in annual savings, before accounting

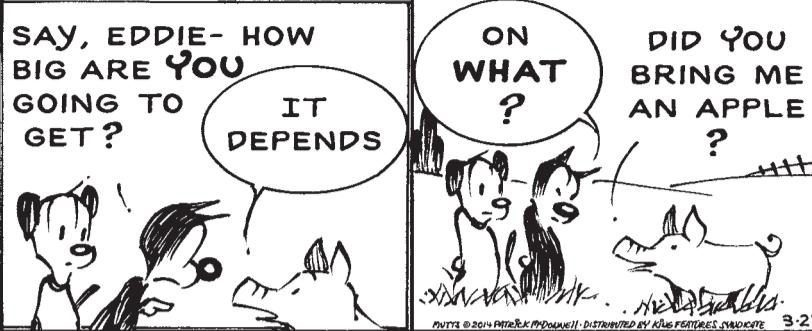
charges related to those cuts.

Those charges, which will total about \$65 million, will mostly be recorded in the first quarter.

The entire restructuring plan is expected to deliver \$175 million to \$200 million a year in savings, the company said.

Levi Strauss, which is based in San Francisco, said that additional charges will be recorded in the future. □

Mutts



Conceptis Sudoku

9		4	7	
7	3	6		
8	3	4		
	8	9	7	
4	9	6		
5		8		1
7	1	2		
2	9		6	

Difficulty Level ★★★

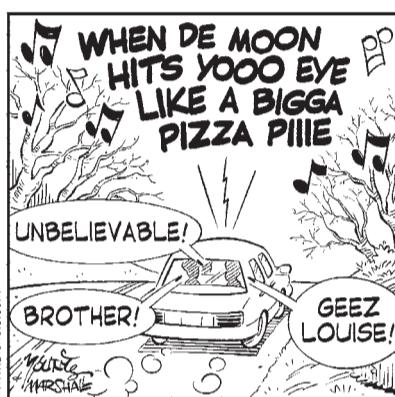
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3/27

6 Chix



Blondie



4	1	5	6	7	3	9	2	8
7	3	8	2	9	1	6	5	4
6	2	9	4	5	8	1	7	3
1	9	6	7	4	2	8	3	5
8	7	2	3	1	5	4	9	6
5	4	3	9	8	6	2	1	7
2	6	7	1	3	4	5	8	9
3	8	1	5	6	9	7	4	2
9	5	4	8	2	7	3	6	1

Yesterday's puzzle answer

4	1	5	6	7	3	9	2	8
7	3	8	2	9	1	6	5	4
6	2	9	4	5	8	1	7	3
1	9	6	7	4	2	8	3	5
8	7	2	3	1	5	4	9	6
5	4	3	9	8	6	2	1	7
2	6	7	1	3	4	5	8	9
3	8	1	5	6	9	7	4	2
9	5	4	8	2	7	3	6	1

Mother Goose & Grimm



ACROSS

- 1 Desert, as one's lover
5 Rattled
10 Actress — Downey
14 Reason to bathe
15 Glider or 747
16 Not __ close; way off
17 Kill
18 Birdbrain
20 Egg layer
21 Gentle
22 Makes, as a salary
23 Emulate Michelle Kwan
25 Donkey
26 In __; shortly
28 In a __; unsure what to do
31 Blackboard user's need
32 Tiny weights
34 British mother
36 Dawn, for short
37 Levi's
38 Daddy
39 BPOE member
40 Diving birds
41 Not as coarse
42 Respect highly
44 Chops into tiny pieces
45 Actor Holbrook
46 Prefix meaning "sort of"
47 Actor Buddy __
50 Injured
51 Dessert choice
54 __ ads; section of a newspaper
57 Armed conflicts
58 Needle's eye
59 Worth
60 Sitting on
61 Has debts
62 Go into
63 Declare untrue

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15					16			
17				18					19			
20				21					22			
23	24								25			
26	27								28			
31									32	33		
36									37			
39									40			
42	43								44			
45									46			
47	48	49							50			
54									55	56		
58									59		60	
61									62		63	

3/27/14

Baby Blues



Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

M	E	L	A	I	L	E	D	S	W	A	K
E	X	A	M	G	R	O	V	E	M	A	G
N	I	C	E	R	O	B	E	S	O	N	E
T	E	N	S	E	N	S	S	O	D	D	S
S	O	E	S	E	A	T	E	A	T	E	
A	L	M	O	N	D	M	A	R	S	H	A
M	O	O	R	S	M	I	R	T	L	E	A
A	C	T	S	P	U	T	T	S	V	A	T
S	A	T	S	O	L	E	S	L	I	M	T
S	L	O	P	P	I	E	R	M	E	L	O

3/27/14

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Zits



- DOWN
1 with; tease
2 Not working
3 Usurers
4 Attempt
5 Modernize
38 Bowling targets
40 Tilts
41 Italian car
42 High school
math class:
abbr.
43 Grad school
papers
44 Cain's crime
45 "Red Planet"
46 In a __; lined
up
47 Resound
48 Hard hit
49 Store event
50 Sword handle
51 Make smooth
52 Catch sight of
53 TV's "___ Got a
Secret"
55 Groupie
57 Fistful of cash

M	E	L	A	I	L	E	D	S	W	A	K
E	X	A	M	G	R	O	V	E	M	A	G
N	I	C	E	R	O	B	S	E	O	N	E
T	E	N	S	E	N	S	S	O	D	D	S
S	O	E	S	E	A	T	E	A	T	E	
A	L	M	O	N	D	M	A	R	S	H	A
M	O	O	R	S	M	I	R	T	L	E	A
A	C	T	S	P	U	T	T	S	V	A	T
S	A	T	S	O	L	E	S	L	I	M	T
S	L	O	P	P	I	E	R	M	E	L	O

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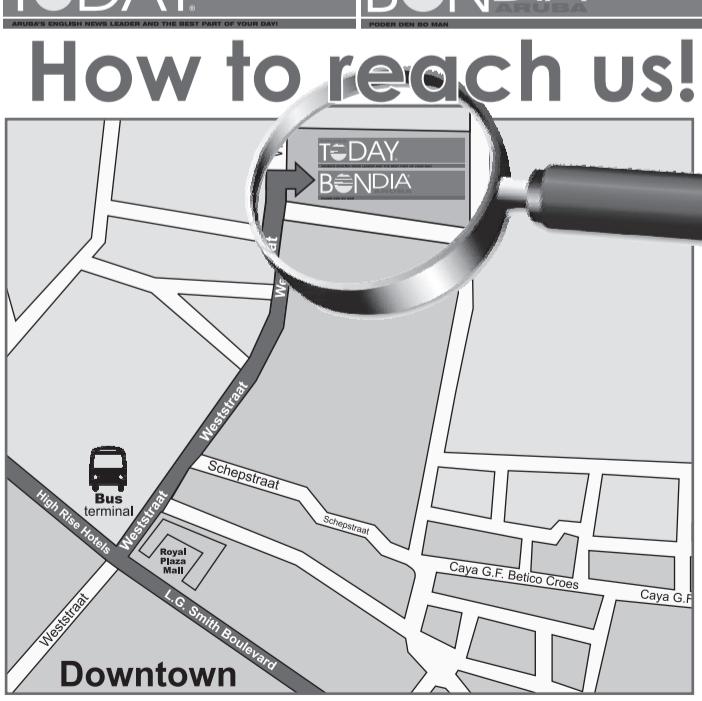
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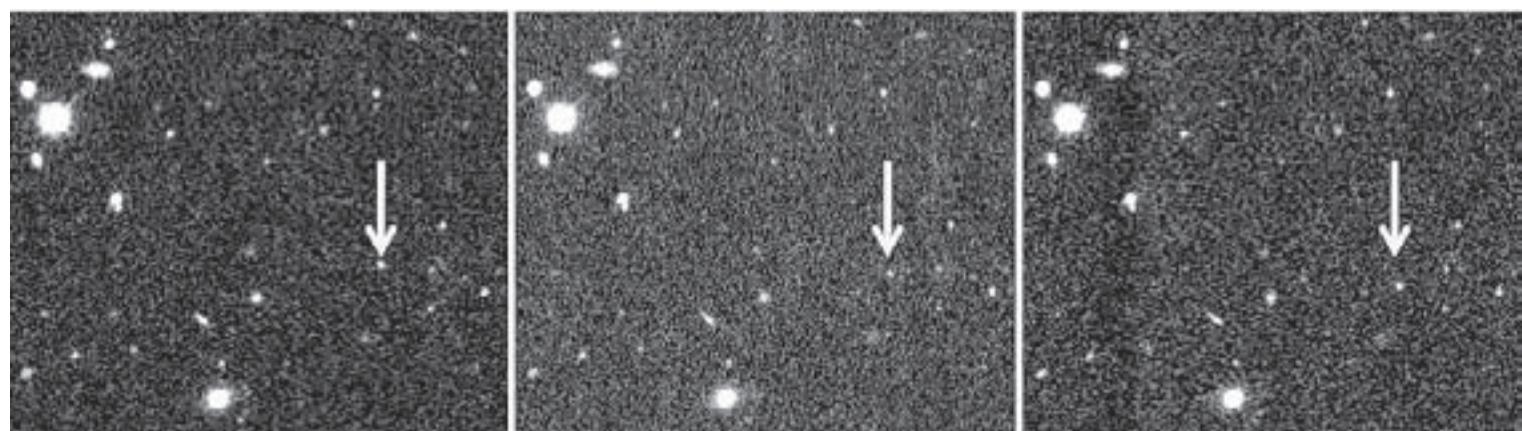
Newfound pink world lurks at solar system fringes

ALICIA CHANG
AP Science Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Peering into the far reaches of the solar system, astronomers have spied a pink frozen world 7½ billion miles (12 billion kilometers) from the sun.

It's the second such object to be discovered in a region of space beyond Pluto long considered a celestial wasteland. Until now, the lone known resident in this part of the solar system was an oddball dwarf planet spotted in 2003 named Sedna after the mythological Inuit goddess who created the sea creatures of the Arctic. The latest discovery shows "Sedna is not a freak. We can have confidence that there is a new population to explore," Yale University senior research scientist David Rabinowitz said in an email. He was one of Sedna's founders, but had no role in the new find detailed in Thursday's issue of the journal Nature.

For years, astronomers hunted in vain for other Sednas in the little-studied



This combination of images provided by the Carnegie Institution for Science shows a new solar system object dubbed 2012 VP113, indicated by the yellow arrow, that was observed on November 2012 through a telescope in Chile.

Associated Press

fringes of the solar system. The new object, 2012 VP113, was tracked using a new camera on a ground telescope in Chile by Scott Sheppard of the Carnegie Institution for Science in Washington, D.C., and Chad Trujillo of the Gemini Observatory in Hawaii. Trujillo was part of the team that found Sedna. Like Sedna, VP is also a dwarf planet. It's jokingly nicknamed "Biden" after Vice President Joe Biden because of the object's initials. It measures about 280 miles (450 kilometers) across, or half the diameter

of Sedna. Unlike red and shiny Sedna, the newfound object is more pink and much fainter, which made it hard to detect.

By contrast, Earth is about 7,900 miles (12,713 kilometers) across and located 93 million miles (149.66 million kilometers) from the sun. Sedna and VP reside in what's known as the inner Oort cloud in the outer edge of the solar system where some comets such as the sun-diving Comet ISON are thought to originate. ISON broke apart last year after brushing too close to the sun.

"Finding Sedna so far away seemed odd and potentially a fluke. But this one is beginning to make it look like that might be a typical place for objects to be. Not at all what I would have guessed," Mike Brown, an astronomer at the California Institute of Technology,

said in an email. Brown led the Sedna team, but was not part of the new discovery.

Far from being deserted, Sheppard and Trujillo estimate there are probably thousands of similar objects in the inner Oort cloud. "These objects are not unique. There's a huge number out there," Sheppard said.

Not all of them will be visible to telescopes because they're so far away and it takes a long time for them to swing by the sun. Sedna and VP were spotted at their closest approach to the sun, which allowed light from the sun to hit the objects and bounce back to observatories on Earth. VP is currently the third farthest object in the solar system after dwarf planet Eris and Sedna, but it has an eccentric, elongated orbit that can take it out to 42 billion miles (67.6 million

kilometers) from the sun. Sedna can loop out as far as 84 billion miles (135 million kilometers) from the sun at its farthest point.

Now that Sedna has company — and likely lots of them — scientists are searching for more objects in an effort to learn how they and the solar system formed and evolved.

In a separate discovery published in Nature, a team led by Felipe Braga-Ribas of the National Observatory in Brazil found a pair of rings around an asteroid-like interloper in the outer system named Chariklo.

While not as dazzling as Saturn's rings, it's the first time rings have been discovered outside of the four gas giants — Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. How little Chariklo got its rings remains a mystery, but scientists think they may have formed from debris from a violent collision. □

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Space station arrival delayed for U.S.-Russian crew

NATALIYA VASILYeva
Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — A software glitch on a Russian spacecraft heading to the International Space Station has delayed the arrival of three astronauts, including an American. NASA said the crew was in no danger, and the U.S.-Russia space partnership was strong despite tensions over Ukraine. The Soyuz spacecraft carrying Russians Alexander Skvortsov and Oleg Artemyev and NASA's Steve Swanson blasted off suc-

cessfully early Wednesday and was scheduled to dock six hours later. But because of the glitch, the arrival was pushed back until late Thursday.

Since the 2011 retirement of the U.S. space shuttle fleet, NASA has depended on the Russian spacecraft to ferry crews to the orbiting outpost and is paying Russia nearly \$71 million per seat. This cooperation has continued despite tensions over Russia's annexation of Crimea and U.S. calls for harsher sanctions on Russia.

NASA Administrator Charles Bolden repeatedly has said that the conflict in Ukraine would have no effect on the U.S.-Russian partnership. As recently as Tuesday he reiterated on his blog that while NASA continues to cooperate successfully with Russia, it wants to get its own capacity to launch crews as quickly as possible. NASA is trying to speed up private American companies' efforts to launch crews into orbit, but it needs extra funding. □



Oprah Winfrey speaks on stage at the 45th NAACP Image Awards at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2014, in Pasadena, Calif. Associated Press

Oprah Winfrey takes a show on the road

NEW YORK (AP) — Oprah Winfrey is taking a self-help show on the road to eight cities this fall, a two-day event giving fans a chance to see and possibly meet her.

The talk-show host and chief of the OWN television network said Wednesday the "Oprah's The Life You Want Weekend" will include some of the personalities she has featured over the years. Also appearing will be OWN host Iyanla Vanzant, "Eat, Pray, Love" author Elizabeth Gilbert and Pastor Rob Bell, with author Deepak Chopra at some of the tour stops.

Winfrey has done speaking engagements and held a few live "Oprah's Life Class" events in recent

years, but nothing of this scale, organizers said.

"All of my life I have wanted to lead people to an empathy space. To a gratitude space," Winfrey said. "I want us all to fulfill our greatest potential. To find our calling, and summon the courage to live it."

Tickets start at \$99 and range up to \$999. The top price will buy a prime arena seat, gift bags and an opportunity to meet the star. Winfrey will talk on Friday night in each city, with Saturdays devoted to the other personalities. The first stop will be Atlanta on the first weekend in September, with subsequent arena stops outside Detroit; in Washington; Newark, N.J.; Houston; Miami; Seattle; and San Jose, Calif. □

Hasbro asks Facebook fans for their Monopoly rules

MAE ANDERSON
AP Business Writer

PAWTUCKET, Rhode Island (AP) — Hasbro knows that Monopoly fans play with their own rules, from negotiating to co-own properties to collecting a pile of cash if you land on 'Free Parking.' So it is letting Facebook fans dictate the 'house rules' in future editions of the game. It's the latest stunt from Hasbro to breathe new life into the 79-year-old game. Last year Hasbro added a cat token and retired the iron. The Pawtucket, Rhode Island company has also issued games with an electronic bank and theme editions ranging from Monopoly Jr. to Monopoly Millionaire.

Starting Tuesday through April 3, Facebook fans can debate 10 'house rules' that are on the site. The top rules will make it into the House Rules Edition that will be available in the fall. They'll also be in the classic Monopoly's game guide in 2015, although officially the rules will not change. □

How Dwayne Johnson kept 'Hercules' look a secret



Dwayne Johnson, star of the upcoming film "Hercules," is interviewed before the Opening Night Presentation from Paramount Pictures at CinemaCon 2014 on Monday, March 24, 2014, in Las Vegas. Associated Press

JESSICA HERNDON
AP Film Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — It was extremely hard for Dwayne Johnson to keep his "Hercules" look under wraps while filming the Brett Ratner-directed movie in Hungary last year. But he did it for the greater good of the big reveal. "As an actor, not showing my chiseled, extraordinary, handsome face was a tremendous sacrifice for me," he joked on Monday before the premiere of the film's trailer at Las Vegas movie-theater convention CinemaCon.

"Paramount, MGM and I made a pact," he added. "We wanted to make a massive global and entertaining movie while doing all we could to never reveal the actual look of Hercules." Slowly rolling out photos from the set of the film for the past few months via his Twitter page, Johnson aimed to bring fans along on his journey — from his training to his diet and prep. On Sunday, the 41-year-old actor finally unveiled his "Hercules" look in its entirety.

Via Twitter, he posted a photo revealing his full beard, shoulder-length brown locks and armor. In the caption accompanying the photo he wrote: "The world's first superhero. #TilDeathOrVictory."

We're offered hints of the Greek hero's abilities in the film's trailer, which debuts wide on Tuesday. In it, Hercules battles the multi-headed Lernaean hydra water monster, the behemoth Erymanthian boar and the massive Nemean lion. In the following clip he classically dons the skinned lion as a headpiece.

But, of course, Hercules is a multifaceted figure, so we're also treated to a brief snapshot of the hero absorbed in a tender lip-lock.

The teaser's conclusion takes us right back to the barbarousness, with the Greek hero fiercely yelling, "I am Hercules!"

At 6 feet 5 inches, the extremely muscular Johnson said he trained harder for "Hercules," which hits theaters July 25, than any other role. "But in the end," he added. "It was all well worth it." □

John Coltrane's sax joins Smithsonian jazz collection



This undated handout photo provided by the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History shows John Coltrane's Selmer Mark VI tenor saxophone, one of three principal saxophones Coltrane played.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — One of John Coltrane's tenor saxophones is joining the jazz collection at a U.S. museum.

Coltrane's son, musician Ravi Coltrane, donated one of his father's three principal tenor saxophones to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History on Wednesday. It's a Selmer Mark VI tenor sax made in Paris about 1965.

The donation marks the 50th anniversary of John Coltrane's masterpiece composition "A Love Supreme."

Jazz photographer Chuck Stewart also do-

nated some rare and never displayed photographs from the recording session for "A Love Supreme." The images come from long-forgotten negatives of photographs taken in 1964. Stewart is known for his images of jazz culture and notable musicians.

The manuscript for "A Love Supreme" is going on display in the museum's "American Stories" exhibit through June 17. It's considered one of the great jazz compositions of all time. Coltrane's saxophone will be placed on display starting in June. □

Paltrow's 'conscious uncoupling' confounds many

JOCELYN NOVECK
AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Like any world unto itself, Hollywood has its own lexicon. But Gwyneth Paltrow's use of the term "conscious uncoupling" to describe her breakup with Chris Martin this week had even Hollywood veterans scratching their heads and reaching — metaphorically at least — for a dictionary.

Of course, there was snark, too. And, on the other hand, some real appreciation for the message and the way it was delivered — in a joint post from the actress and her rock-star husband on Paltrow's lifestyle website, goop. (Which — surprise! — crashed from the traffic.)

But before we get to that, let's start with the basics: What the heck does "conscious uncoupling" mean? "I've never heard it, but it sounds like a phrase used by marriage therapists in Malibu," quipped Janice Min, editor of The Hollywood Reporter.

Pretty close, actually. The term was coined by a Los Angeles therapist and author, Katherine Woodward Thomas, who has created a five-step "Conscious Uncoupling" online process — to "release the trauma of a breakup, reclaim your



This Jan. 11, 2014 file photo shows actress Gwyneth Paltrow, left, and her husband, singer Chris Martin at the 3rd Annual Sean Penn & Friends Help Haiti Home Gala in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

power and reinvent your life."

Speaking by telephone Wednesday from Costa Rica, where she traveled to write her second book — called, not surprisingly, "Conscious Uncoupling" — Thomas explained that her goal was "to create a map for a couple to consciously complete a relationship — to have an honorable ending."

Thomas said that the assumption that people will have only one lifetime part-

ner — and that anything else is a failure — comes from a time long ago when the lifespan was much shorter.

"I'm a fan of marriage, but I recognize that most people in their lives will have two to three longtime relationships — which means one to two breakups. And so we need to learn how to do this better," she said.

Thomas said she doesn't know Paltrow, but applauded what she called her and Martin's cour-

age in the way they announced their breakup. "They're modeling this for the world," she said.

Not surprisingly, though, the reference evoked some snark, in Hollywood and across the pond in Britain, where the couple is also based.

"What deluded tosh," headlined a column in The Guardian, using slang for rubbish, or nonsense. (Tosh perhaps, but the phrase actually made it to the House of Lords, Britain's upper

chamber of Parliament, where a Labour Party lawmaker referred to a political disagreement over university fees on Wednesday as "yet another example of the coalition's conscious uncoupling.")

Others, though, were touched by the message — while noting how expertly it was managed from a public relations standpoint, with the news released late on a Tuesday, after the celebrity weeklies had all closed their issues.

"It was very smart," said Min, who is also former editor of US Weekly. "By next week, there will be other news, and they probably won't be on the cover at all." And the fact that the couple made the statement on Paltrow's website gave them, of course, message control.

On the other hand, Min said, "I was touched — it really felt sincere. And it gave us more information than you normally get in these situations — revealing they'd been separated for a while. There was a sincerity here that you rarely see." Also, Paltrow and Martin, the Coldplay frontman, have two children — Apple, 9, and Moses, 7 — so they have a strong reason to control the message. □



This Oct. 20, 2013 file photo shows author John Grisham at the opening night of "A Time To Kill" on Broadway in New York.

Associated Press

HILLEL ITALIE
AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — For at least one day, publishing's annual national convention is going pop.

The organizers of New York

Comic Con, ReedPOP, announced Wednesday they will launch BookCon during BookExpo America, a weekend gathering in New York in late May. The "massive pop culture" event

BookCon, fan-based book event, to launch in Ma

will feature author John Grisham, actress-author Amy Poehler and other well-known guests. BookExpo will have its own celebrity guests, including Lena Dunham and Anjelica Huston, but it's primarily a trade show held for booksellers, librarians and others in the industry. BookCon will be open to the general public. According to ReedPOP, BookCon will take place May 31 at the Javits Center and include panel discussions, podcasts, interviews and trivia contests — programming also common at BookExpo.

"We want to bottle some

of that energy from Comic Con and use it for the book world," said Lance Fensterman, global senior vice president for ReedPOP and a former show manager of BookExpo.

Fensterman called the launch of BookCon a circular journey, saying that New York Comic Con (unaffiliated with Comic-Con in San Diego) was conceived as an offshoot of BookExpo America and now is the basis for a new feature at the publishing convention. He didn't rule out BookCon becoming a separate convention, but said the focus now is on establishing a

"critical mass."

"We want to get to 10,000 fans this year, that would be a success," said Fensterman, who noted that New York Comic Con drew more than 100,000 fans in 2013. BookCon will replace and expand on the "power readers" program introduced two years ago at BookExpo, when hundreds of non-industry attendees were permitted. With sales at best flat in recent years, publishers have been trying to engage readers directly, whether through social media or by authors participating in book club discussions. □

Wealth Over Work



PAUL KRUGMAN
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It seems safe to say that "Capital in the Twenty-First Century," the magnum opus of the French economist Thomas Piketty, will be the most important economics book of the year - and maybe of the decade. Piketty, arguably the world's leading expert on income and wealth inequality, does more than document the growing concentration of income in the hands of a small economic elite. He also makes a powerful case that we're on the way back to "patrimonial capitalism," in which the commanding heights of the economy are dominated not just by wealth, but also by inherited wealth, in which birth matters more than effort and talent.

To be sure, Piketty concedes that we aren't there yet. So far, the rise of America's 1 percent has mainly been driven by executive salaries and bonuses rather than income from investments, let alone inherited wealth. But six of the 10 wealthiest Americans are already heirs rather than self-made entrepreneurs, and the children of today's economic elite start from a position of immense privilege. As Piketty notes, "the risk of a drift toward oligarchy is real and gives little reason for optimism."

Indeed. And if you want to feel even less optimistic, consider what many U.S. politicians are up to. America's nascent oligarchy may not yet be fully formed - but one of our two main political parties seems committed to defending the oligarchy's interests.

Despite the frantic efforts of some Republicans to pretend otherwise, most people realize that today's GOP favors the interests of the rich over those of ordinary families. I suspect, however, that fewer people realize the extent to which the party favors returns on wealth over wages and salaries. And the dominance of income from capital, which can be inherited, over wages - the dominance of wealth over work - is what patrimonial capitalism is all about.

To see what I'm talking about, start with actual policies and policy proposals. It's generally understood that George W. Bush did all he could to cut taxes on the very affluent, that the middle-class cuts he included were essentially political loss leaders. It's less well under-

stood that the biggest breaks went not to people paid high salaries but to coupon-clippers and heirs to large estates. True, the top tax bracket on earned income fell from 39.6 to 35 percent. But the top rate on dividends fell from 39.6 percent (because they were taxed as ordinary income) to 15 percent - and the estate tax was completely eliminated.

Some of these cuts were reversed under President Barack Obama, but the point is that the great tax-cut push of the Bush years was mainly about reducing taxes on unearned income. And when Republicans retook one house of Congress, they promptly came up with a plan - Rep. Paul Ryan's "road map" - calling for the elimination of taxes on interest, dividends, capital gains and estates. Under this plan, someone living solely off inherited wealth would have owed no federal taxes at all.

This tilt of policy toward the interests of wealth has been mirrored by a tilt in rhetoric; Republicans often seem so intent on exalting "job creators" that they forget to mention American workers. In 2012, Rep. Eric Cantor, the House majority leader, famously commemorated Labor Day with a Twitter post honoring business owners. More recently, Cantor reportedly reminded colleagues at a GOP retreat that most Americans work for other people, which is at least one reason attempts to make a big issue out of Obama's supposed denigration of businesspeople fell flat. (Another reason was that Obama did no such thing.)

In fact, not only don't most Americans own businesses, but business income, and income from capital in general, is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few people. In 1979 the top 1 percent of households accounted for 17 percent of business income; by 2007 the same group was getting 43 percent of business income, and 75 percent of capital gains. Yet this small elite gets all of the GOP's love, and most of its policy attention.

Why is this happening? Well, bear in mind that both Koch brothers are numbered among the 10 wealthiest Americans, and so are four Wal-Mart heirs. Great wealth buys great political influence - and not just through campaign contributions. Many conservatives live inside an intellectual bubble of think tanks and captive media that is ultimately financed by a handful of megadonors. Not surprisingly, those inside the bubble tend to assume, instinctively, that what is good for oligarchs is good for America.

As I've already suggested, the results can sometimes seem comical. The important point to remember, however, is that the people inside the bubble have a lot of power, which they wield on behalf of their patrons. And the drift toward oligarchy continues. □



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DANZIGER

Putin and the Laws of Gravity



THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
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One thing I learned covering the Middle East for many years is that there is "the morning after" and there is "the morning after the morning after." Never confuse the two.

The morning after a big event is when fools rush in and declare that someone's victory or defeat in a single battle has "changed everything forever." The morning after the morning after, the laws of gravity start to apply themselves; things often don't look as good or as bad as you thought. And that brings me to Vladimir Putin's annexation of Crimea.

The morning after, he was the hero of Russia. Some moronic commentators here even expressed the wish that we had such a "decisive" leader. Well, let's see what Putin looks like the morning after the morning after, say, in six months. I make no predictions, but I will point out this. Putin is challenging three of the most powerful forces on the planet all at once: human nature, Mother Nature and Moore's Law. Good luck with that.

Putin's seizure of Crimea certainly underscores the enduring power of geography in geopolitics. Russia is a continental country, stretching across a huge landmass, with few natural barriers to protect it. Every Kremlin leader - from the czars to the commissars to the crooks - has been obsessed about protecting Russia's periphery from would-be invaders. Russia has legitimate security interests, but this episode is not about them.

This recent Ukraine drama did not start with geography - with an outside power trying to get into Russia, as much as Putin wants to pretend that it did. This story started with people inside Russia's orbit trying to get out. A large number of Ukrainians wanted to hitch their economic future to the European Union and not to Putin's Potemkin Eurasian Union. This story, at its core, was ignited and propelled by human nature - the enduring quest by people to realize a better future for themselves and their kids - not by geopolitics, or even that much nationalism. This is not an "invasion" story. This is an "Exodus" story.

And no wonder. A recent article in Bloomberg Businessweek noted that, in 2012, GDP per person in Ukraine was \$6,394 - some 25 percent below its level of nearly a quarter-century earlier. But if you compare Ukraine with four of its former Communist neighbors to the west who joined the EU - Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania - "the average GDP per person in those nations is around \$17,000." Can you blame Ukrainians for wanting to join a different club?

But Putin is also counting on the world doing nothing about Mother Nature, and Mother Nature taking that in stride. Some 70 percent of Russia's exports are oil and gas, and they make up half of all state revenue. (When was the last time you bought something that was labeled "Made in Russia"?) Putin has basically bet his country's economic present and future on hydrocarbons at a time when the chief economist of the International Energy Agency has declared that "about two-thirds of all proven reserves of oil, gas and coal will have to be left undeveloped if the world is to achieve the goal of limiting global warming at 2 degrees Celsius" since the Industrial Revolution. Crossing that 2-degree line, say climate scientists, will dramatically increase the likelihood of melting the Arctic,

dangerous sea level rises, more disruptive superstorms and unmanageable climate change. The former Saudi oil minister, Sheik Ahmed Zaki Yamani, once warned his OPEC colleagues something Putin should remember: "The Stone Age didn't end because we ran out of stones." It ended because we invented bronze tools, which were more productive. The hydrocarbon age will also have to end with a lot of oil, coal and gas left in the ground, replaced by cleaner forms of power generation, or Mother Nature will have her way with us. Putin is betting otherwise.

How do you say Moore's Law in Russian? That's the theorem posited by Gordon Moore, an Intel co-founder, that the processing power of microchips will double roughly every two years. Anyone following the clean power industry today can tell you that there is something of a Moore's Law now at work around solar power, the price of which is falling so fast that more and more homes and even utilities are finding it as cheap to install as natural gas. Wind is on a similar trajectory, as is energy efficiency. China alone is on a track to be getting 15 percent of its total electricity production by 2020 from renewables, and it's not stopping there. It can't or its people can't breathe. If America and Europe were to give even just a little more policy push now to renewables to reduce Putin's oil income, these actions could pay dividends much sooner and bigger than people realize. The legitimacy of China's leaders today depends, in part, on their ability to make their country's power system greener so their people can breathe. Putin's legitimacy depends on keeping Russia and the world addicted to oil and gas. Whom do you want to bet on? So, before we crown Putin the Time Person of the Year again, let's wait and see how the morning after the morning after plays out. □

Visionary or looney? Zuckerberg on spending spree

BARBARA ORTUTAY

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Facebook's latest multibillion dollar acquisition of virtual reality headset maker Oculus is prompting some people to wonder if CEO Mark Zuckerberg is already living in an alternate reality.

Longtime technology analyst Roger Kay wonders whether Zuckerberg "is nuts" for agreeing to pay \$2 billion for Oculus less than five weeks after inking a deal to buy WhatsApp for \$19 billion.

Oculus, which got its start on the crowdfunding site Kickstarter, doesn't have a consumer product on the market, just the promise of bulky virtual reality goggles that have generated huge buzz in the video gaming community.

Zuckerberg, for his part, sees long-term implications in the technology, for communication, entertainment and beyond. He was right about mobile, and he's created the world's biggest online social network. So, is he looney, or vision-

ary?

"Mobile is the platform of today and now we're starting to also get ready for the platforms of tomorrow. To me, by far the most exciting future platform is around vision or modifying what you see to create augmented and immersive experiences," Zuckerberg said on a conference call Tuesday discussing the deal. "Today's acquisition is a long-term bet on the future of computing. I believe Oculus can be one of the platforms of this future." Facebook's investors seem to think Oculus's promise is too far off. The Menlo Park, California-based social networking company's stock fell 7 percent on Wednesday to close at \$60.38.

Beyond sticker shock, the WhatsApp and Oculus deals — along with the Facebook's spurned offer to buy SnapChat for \$3 billion — have raised questions about Facebook's ability to innovate on its own. Some of the company's most high-profile products, such as the SnapChat-like Poke, the messaging ser-

vice Facebook Messenger and Home, have flopped. The jury's still out on Paper, a stand-alone app that lets users read news, Facebook feeds and more.

"Facebook I don't think has the best innovation strategy," says Gartner analyst Brian Blau. "So far it's been 'move fast and break things.' Move fast is good, but break thinks, may not be."

Blau calls the Oculus acquisition "kind of out of left field."

"We have always thought about experience as a focus of virtual reality," he says. "Certainly it can be social, but we have not thought about it as a core social experience."

That's not to say it can't work. There were questions about Facebook's acquisition of Instagram back when it offered \$1 billion for the photo-sharing app (the final purchase price was \$715 million) in April 2012 — and Instagram "turned out fine," Blau points out. Facebook said Tuesday that Instagram has 200 million users, up from 30 million at the time

it agreed to buy the company.

Oculus is a horizontal acquisition for Facebook, which means it lets the company expand into a new space, rather than grow its core business. It's a strategy employed by Amazon.com Inc., whose businesses range from online retail to video streaming to tablets, and Google Inc., which recently bought high-tech thermostat and smoke-detector maker Nest Labs for \$3.2 billion.

Like Facebook, Google is led by a CEO, Larry Page, who has vowed to make huge investments building or buying technology that might not pay off for years. Page can do pretty much as he pleases, too, as long as he gains the support of fellow co-founder Sergey Brin and Google Executive Chairman Eric Schmidt. The trio collectively controls enough votes to overrule the rest of Google's shareholders.

Google has made more than 230 acquisitions since going public nearly a decade ago, but most of those deals have been

relatively small for a company that now generates more than \$50 billion in annual revenue.

A few of the deals have been large enough for some investors to wonder whether Google's brain trust had lost its senses.

When Google bought YouTube in 2006 for \$1.76 billion in stock, some analysts questioned whether the company had paid far too much for a video site with virtually no revenue and a huge stack of potentially expensive legal claims for copyright infringement. But that deal is now widely viewed as a brilliant move. YouTube has productive relationships with most movie and television studios and sells billions of dollars in video advertising while amassing a worldwide audience of more than 1 billion people. Google's biggest acquisition, a \$12.4 billion purchase of troubled cellphone maker Motorola Mobility, turned out to be a dud, just as many analysts predicted it would be when the deal was announced in 2011. □



Attendees play a video game wearing Oculus Rift virtual reality headsets at the Intel booth at the International Consumer Electronics Show (CES), in Las Vegas. (Associated Press)